THE Anne T. Cooper
from her Grandpa
April 1st 1856

POETICAL WORKS

OF

MILTON, YOUNG, GRAY, BEATTIE, AND COLLINS.

COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.

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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

JOHN MILTON.

Contents.

Page.

Life of Milton, ... v
Encomiums upon Milton, ... xxx

PARADISE LOST.

Book I, ... 1
Book II, ... 8
Book III, ... 18
Book IV, ... 24
Book V, ... 34
Book VI, ... 42
Book VII, ... 50
Book VIII, ... 56
Book IX, ... 62
Book X, ... 73
Book XI, ... 83
Book XII, ... 91

PARADISE REGAINED.

Book I, ... 97
Book II, ... 102
Book III, ... 106
Book IV, ... 111

Samson Agonistes, ... 117

Comus, ... 124

POEMS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

On the death of a fair Infant, ... 144
At a Vacation Exercise in the College, . . 145
On the morning of Christ's Nativity, . . . 146
The Passion, ... 148
On Time, ... 149
Upon the Circumcision, ... ib.
At a solemn Music, ... ib.
An Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester, 150
Song on May Morning, ... ib.
On Shakspeare. . . . . ib.

Page.

On the University Carrier, ... 151
Another on the Same, ... ib.
L'Allegro, ... ib.
Il Penseroso, ... 153
Arcades, ... 154
Lycidas, ... 155
On the New Forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament, ... 157

SONNETS.

To the Nightingale, ... 158
On his being arrived at the age of twenty-three, ib.
When the Assault was intended to the City, ib.
To a Virtuous Young Lady, ... ib.
To the Lady Margaret Ley, ... ib.
On the Detraction which followed upon my writing certain Treatises, ... ib.
On the Same, ... 159
To Mr. H. Lawes, on the Publishing of his Airs, ib.
On the Religious Memory of Mrs. Catherine Thomson, ... ib.
To the Lord General Fairfax, ... ib.
To the Lord General Cromwell, ... ib.
To Sir Henry Vane, the younger, ... ib.
On the late Massacre at Piemont, ... 160
On his blindness, ... ib.
To Mr. Lawrence, ... ib.
To Cyriac Skinner, ... ib.
On his deceased wife, ... ib.
To Cyriac Skinner, ... 161

TRANSLATIONS.

Horace to Pyrrha, ... 161
Fragments, ... ib.
Psalms, ... 162
Paraphrase of Psalm cxiv, ... 170
Paraphrase of Psalm cxxxvi, ... ib.

The Life of John Milton.

It is agreed among all writers, that the family of Milton came originally from Milton in Oxfordshire; but from which of the Miltons is not altogether so certain. Some say, and particularly Mr. Philips, that the family was of Milton near Abington, in Oxfordshire, where it had been a long time seated, as appears by the monuments still to be seen in Milton-church. But that Milton is not in Oxfordshire, but in Berkshire; and upon inquiry I find, that there are no such monuments in that church, nor any remains of them. It is more probable, therefore, that the family came, as Mr. Wood says, from Milton near Halton and Thame in Oxfordshire: where it flourished several years, till at last the estate was sequestered, one of the family having taken the unfortunate side in the civil wars between the houses of York and Lancaster. John Milton, the poet's grand-father, was, according to Mr. Wood, an under-ranger or keeper of the forest of Shotover, near Halton, in Oxfordshire; he was of the religion of Rome, and such a bigot that he disinherited his son only for being a protestant. Upon this, the son, the poet's father, named likewise John Milton, settled in London, and became a scrivener by the advice of a friend eminent in that profession: but he was not so devoted to gain and to business, as to lose all taste of the politer arts, and was particularly skilled in music, in which he was not only a fine performer, but is also celebrated for several pieces of his composition: and yet, on the other hand, he was not so fond of his music and amusements, as in the least to neglect his business, but by his diligence and economy acquired a competent estate, which enabled him afterwards to retire, and live in the country. He was, by all accounts, a very worthy man; and married an excellent woman, Sarah, of the ancient family of the Bradshaws, says Mr. Wood; but Mr. Philips, our author's nephew, who was more likely to know, says, of the family of the Castons derived originally from Wales. Whoever she was, she is said to have been a woman of incomparable virtue and goodness; and by her husband had two sons and a daughter.

The elder of the sons was our famous poet, who was born in the year of our Lord 1608, on the 9th of December, in the morning between six and seven o'clock, in Bread-street, London, where his father lived at the sign of the spread eagle, which was also the coat of arms of the family. He was named John, as his father and grand-father had been before him; and from the beginning discovering the marks of an uncommon genius, he was designed for a scholar, and had his education partly under private tutors, and partly at a public school. It has been often controverted whether a public or private education is best, but young Milton was so happy as to share the advantages of both. It appears from the fourth of his Latin elegies, and from the first and fourth of his familiar epistles, that Mr. Thomas Young, who was afterwards pastor of the company of English merchants residing at Hamburg, was one of his private preceptors: and when he had made good progress in his studies at home, he was sent to St. Paul's school to be fitted for the university under the care of Mr. Gill, who was the master at that time, and to whose son are addressed some of his familiar epistles. In this early time of his life such was his love of learning, and so great was his ambition to surpass his equals, that from his twelfth year he commonly continued his studies till midnight, which (as he says himself in his second Defence) was the first ruin of his eyes, to whose natural debility too were added frequent headaches: but all could not extinguish or abate his laudable passion for letters. It is very seldom seen, that such application and such a genius meet in the same person. The force of either is great, but both together must perform wonders.

He was now in the seventeenth year of his age, and was a very good classical scholar and master of several languages, when he was sent to the university of Cambridge, and admitted at Christ's College (as appears from the register) on the 12th of February, 1624–5, under the tuition of Mr. William Chappel, afterwards bishop of Cork and Ross, in Ireland. He continued above seven years at the university, and took two degrees, that of Bachelor of Arts in 1628–9, and that of Master in 1632. It is somewhat remarkable, that though the merits of both our universities are perhaps equally great, and though poetical exercises are rather more encouraged at Oxford, yet most of our greatest poets have been bred at Cambridge, as Spenser, Cowley, Waller, Dryden, Prior, not to mention any of the lesser ones, when there is a greater than all, Milton. He had given early

proofs of his poetic genius before he went to the university, and there he excelled more and more, and distinguished himself by several copies of verses upon occasional subjects, as well as by all his academical exercises, many of which are printed among his other works, and show him to have had a capacity above his years: and by his obliging behaviour, added to his great learning and ingenuity, he deservedly gained the affection of many, and admiration of all. We do not find, however, that he obtained any preferment in the university, or a fellowship in his own college; which seems the more extraordinary, as that society has always encouraged learning and learned men, had the most excellent Mr. Mede, at that time a fellow, and afterwards boasts the great names of Cudworth, and Burnet, author of the Theory of the Earth, and several others. And this, together with some Latin verses of his to a friend, reflecting upon the university seemingly on this account, might probably have given occasion to the reproach which was afterwards cast upon him by his adversaries, that he was expelled from the university for irregularities committed there, and forced to fly to Italy: but he sufficiently refutes this calumny in more places than one of his works; and indeed it is no wonder, that a person so engaged in religious and political controversies as he was, should be calumniated and abused by the contrary party.

He was designed by his parents for holy orders; and among the manuscripts of Trinity College, in Cambridge, there are two draughts in Milton's own hand, of a letter to a friend, who had importuned him to take orders, when he had attained the age of twenty-three: but the truth is, he had conceived early prejudices against the doctrine and discipline of the church, and subscribing to the articles was in his opinion subscribing slave. This, no doubt, was a disappointment to his friends, who, though in comfortable, were yet by no means in great circumstances: and neither does he seem to have had any inclination to any other profession; he had too free a spirit to be limited and confined; and was for comprehending all sciences, but professing none. And therefore after he had left the university in 1632, he retired to his father's house in the country; for his father had by this time quitted business, and lived at an estate which he had purchased at Horton, near Colebrooke, in Buckinghamshire. Here he resided with his parents for the space of five years, and, as he himself has informed us, (in his second Defence, and the seventh of his familiar Epistles) read over all the Greek and Latin authors, particularly the historians; but now and then made an excursion to London, sometimes to buy books, or to meet his friends from Cambridge, and at other times to learn something new in the mathematics or music, with which he was extremely delighted.

His retirement, therefore, was a learned retirement, and it was not long before the world reaped the fruits of it. It was in the year 1634 that his Mask was presented at Ludlow-Castle. There was formerly a president of Wales, and a sort of a court kept at Ludlow, which has since been abolished; and the president at that time was the Earl of Bridgewater, before whom Milton's Mask was presented on Michaelmas night, and the principal parts, those of the two brothers, were performed by his Lordship's sons, the Lord Brackly, and Mr. Thomas Egerton, and that of the lady by his Lordship's daughter, the Lady Alice Egerton. The occasion of this poem seems to have been merely an accident of the two brothers and the lady having lost one another on their way to the castle: and it is written very much in imitation of Shakspeare's Tempest, and the Faithful Shepherdess of Beaumont and Fletcher; and though one of the first, is yet one of the most beautiful of Milton's compositions. It was for some time handed about only in manuscript; but afterwards to satisfy the importunity of friends, and to save the trouble of transcribing, it was printed at London, though without the author's name, in 1637, with a dedication to the Lord Brackly by Mr. H. Lawes, who composed the music, and played the part of the attendant Spirit. It was printed likewise at Oxford at the end of Mr. R.'s poems, as we learn from a letter of Sir Henry Wotton to our author; but who that Mr. R. was, whether Randolph, the poet, or who else, is uncertain. It has lately, though with additions and alterations, been exhibited on the stage several times.

In 1637, he wrote another excellent piece, his Lycidas, wherein he laments the untimely fate of a friend, who was unfortunately drowned that same year in the month of August, on the Irish seas, in his passage from Chester. This friend was Mr. Edward King, son of Sir John King, Secretary of Ireland under Queen Elizabeth, King James I. and Charles I.; and was a fellow of Christ's College, and was so well beloved and esteemed at Cambridge, that some of the greatest names in the University have united in celebrating his obsequies, and published a collection of poems, Greek and Latin and English, sacred to his memory. The Greek by H. More, &c.; the Latin by T. Farnaby, J. Pearson, &c.; the English by H. King, J. Beaumont, J. Cleaveland, with several others; and judiciously the last of all as the best of all, is Milton's Lycidas. "On such sacrifices the Gods themselves strow incense;" and one would almost wish so to have died, for the sake of having been so lamented. But this poem is not all made up of sorrow and tenderness; there is a mixture

of satire and indignation; for in part of it the poet takes occasion to inveigh against the corruptions of the clergy, and seems to have first discovered his acrimony against Archbishop Laud, and to have threatened him with the loss of his head, which afterwards happened to him through the fury of his enemies. At least I can think of no sense so proper to be given to the following verses in Lycidas.

> Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
> Daily devours apace, and nothing said;
> But that two-handed engine at the door
> Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.

About this time, as we learn from some of his familiar epistles, he had some thoughts of taking chambers at one of the Inns of Court, for he was not very well pleased with living so obscurely in the country: but his mother dying, he prevailed with his father to let him indulge a desire, which he had long entertained, of seeing foreign countries, and particularly Italy: and having communicated his design to Sir Henry Wotton, who had formerly been ambassador at Venice, and was then Provost of Eton College, and having also sent him his Mask, of which he had not yet publicly acknowledged himself the author, he received from him the following friendly letter dated from the College the 10th of April, 1738.

"Sir,

"It was a special favour, when you lately bestowed upon me here the first taste of your acquaintance, though no longer than to make me know, that I wanted more time to value it, and to enjoy it rightly. And in truth, if I could then have imagined your farther stay in these parts, which I understood afterwards by Mr. H., I would have been bold, in our vulgar phrase, to mend my draught, for you left me with an extreme thirst, and to have begged your conversation again jointly with your said learned friend, at a poor meal or two, that we might have banded together some good authors of the ancient time, among which I observed you to have been familiar.

"Since your going, you have charged me with new obligations, both for a very kind letter from you, dated the sixth of this month, and for a dainty piece of entertainment, that came therewith; wherein I should much commend the tragical part, if the lyrical did not ravish with a certain doric delicacy in your songs and odes, wherein I must plainly confess to have seen yet nothing parallel in our language, *ipsa mollities*. But I must not omit to tell you, that I now only owe you thanks for intimating unto me, how modestly soever, the true artificer. For the work itself I had viewed some good while before with singular delight, having received it from our common friend Mr. R. in the very close of the late R.'s poems, printed at Oxford; whereunto it is added, as I now suppose, that the accessory might help out the principal, according to the art of stationers, and leave the reader *con la bocca dolce*.

"Now, Sir, concerning your travels, wherein I may challenge a little more privilege of discourse with you; I suppose, you will not blanch Paris in your way. Therefore I have been bold to trouble you with a few lines to Mr. M. B. whom you shall easily find attending the young Lord S. as his governor; and you may surely receive from him good directions for shaping of your farther journey into Italy, where he did reside by my choice some time for the king, after mine own recess from Venice.

"I should think that your best line will be through the whole length of France to Marseilles, and thence by sea to Genoa, whence the passage into Tuscany is as diurnal as a Gravesend barge. I hasten, as you do, to Florence or Sienna, the rather to tell you a short story, from the interest you have given me in your safety.

"At Sienna I was tabled in the house of one Alberto Scipione, an old Roman courtier, in dangerous times, having been steward to the Duca di Pagliano, who with all his family were strangled, save this only man, that escaped by foresight of the tempest. With him I had often much chat of those affairs; into which he took pleasure to look back from his native harbour; and at my departure toward Rome, which had been the centre of his experience, I had won confidence enough to beg his advice, how I might carry myself securely there, without offence of others, or of my own conscience: *Signor Arrigo meo*, says he, *i pensieri stretti, il viso sciolto*, that is, your thoughts close, and your countenance loose, will go safely over the whole world. Of which Delphian oracle (for so I found it) your judgment doth need no commentary; and therefore, Sir, I will commit you with it to the best of all securities, God's dear love, remaining your friend, as much at command as any of longer date.

H. Wotton

"*P. S.* Sir, I have expressly sent this by my footboy to prevent your departure, without some acknowledgment from me of the receipt of your obliging letter, having myself through some business, I know not how, neglected the ordinary conveyance. In any part where I shall understand you fixed, I shall be glad and diligent to entertain you with home-novelties, even for some fomentation of our friendship, too soon interrupted in the cradle."

Soon after this he set out upon his travels, being of an age to make the proper improvements, and

not barely to see sights and to learn the languages, like most of our modern travellers, who go out boys, and return such as we see, but such as I do not choose to name. He was attended by only one servant, who accompanied him through all his travels; and he went first to France, where he had recommendations to the Lord Scudamore, the English ambassador there at that time; and as soon as he came to Paris, he waited upon his Lordship, and was received with wonderful civility; and having an earnest desire to visit the learned Hugo Grotius, he was by his Lordship's means introduced to that great man, who was then ambassador at the French court from the famous Christina Queen of Sweden; and the visit was to their mutual satisfaction; they were each of them pleased to see a person, of whom they had heard such commendations. But at Paris he stayed not long; his thoughts and his wishes hastened into Italy; and so after a few days he took leave of the Lord Scudamore, who very kindly gave him letters to the English merchants, in the several places through which he was to travel, requesting them to do him all the good offices which lay in their power.

From Paris he went directly to Nice, where he took shipping for Genoa, from whence he went to Leghorn, and thence to Pisa, and so to Florence, in which city he found sufficient inducements to make a stay of two months. For besides the curiosities and other beauties of the place, he took great delight in the company and conversation there, and frequented their academies as they are called, the meetings of the most polite and ingenious persons, which they have in this, as well as in the other principal cities of Italy, for the exercise and improvement of wit and learning among them. And in these conversations he bore so good a part, and produced so many excellent compositions, that he was soon taken notice of, and was very much courted and caressed by several of the nobility and prime wits of Florence. For the manner is, as he says himself in the preface to his second book of the Reason of Church-government, that every one must give some proof of his wit and reading there, and his productions were received with written encomiums which the Italian is not forward to bestow on men of this side the Alps. Jacomo Gaddi, Antonio Francini, Carlo Dati, Beneditto Bonmatthei, Cultellino, Frescobaldi, Clementilli, are reckoned among his particular friends. At Gaddi's house the academies were held, which he constantly frequented. Antonio Francini composed an Italian ode in his commendation. Carlo Dati wrote a Latin eulogium of him, and corresponded with him after his return to England. Bonmatthei was at that time about publishing an Italian grammar; and the eighth of our author's familiar epistles, dated at Florence, September 10, 1638, is addressed to him upon that occasion, commending his design, and advising him to add some observations concerning the true pronunciation of that language for the use of foreigners.

So much good acquaintance would probably have detained him longer at Florence, if he had not been going to Rome, which to a curious traveller is certainly the place the most worth seeing of any in the world. And so he took leave of his friends at Florence, and went from thence to Sienna, and from Sienna to Rome, where he stayed much about the same time that he had continued at Florence, feasting both his eyes and his mind, and delighted with the fine paintings and sculptures, and other rarities and antiquities of the city, as well as with the conversation of several learned and ingenious men, and particularly of Lucas Holstenius, keeper of the Vatican library, who received him with the greatest humanity, and showed him all the Greek authors, whether in print or in manuscript, which had passed through his correction; and also presented him to Cardinal Barberini, who at an entertainment of music, performed at his own expense, waited for him at the door, and taking him by the hand brought him into the assembly. The next morning he waited upon the Cardinal to return him thanks for his civilities, and by the means of Holstenius was again introduced to his Eminence, and spent some time in conversation with him. It seems that Holstenius had studied three years at Oxford, and this might dispose him to be more friendly to the English, but he took a particular liking and affection to Milton; and Milton, to thank him for all his favours, wrote to him afterwards from Florence the ninth of his familiar epistles. At Rome too Selvaggi made a Latin distich in honour of Milton, and Salfilli a Latin tetrastich, celebrating him for his Greek and Latin and Italian poetry; and he in return presented to Salfilli in his sickness those fine Scazons, or Iambic verses having a spondee in the last foot, which are inserted among his juvenile poems.

From Rome he went to Naples, in company with a certain hermit; and by his means was introduced to the acquaintance of Giovanni Baptista Manso, Marquis of Villa, a Neapolitan nobleman, of singular merit and virtue, to whom Tasso addresses his dialogue of friendship, and whom he mentions likewise in his Gierusalemme Liberata with great honour. This nobleman was particularly civil to Milton, frequently visited him at his lodgings, and went with him to show him the Viceroy's palace, and whatever was curious or worth notice in the city; and moreover he honoured him so far as to make a Latin distich in his praise, which is printed before our author's Latin poems, as is likewise the other of Selvaggi, and the Latin tetrastich of Salfilli together with the Italian ode and the Latin eulogium before mentioned. We may suppose that Milton was not a little pleased

with the honours conferred upon him by so many persons of distinction, and especially by one of such quality and eminence as the Marquis of Villa; and as a testimony of his gratitude he presented to the Marquis at his departure from Naples his eclogue intitled Mansus, which is well worth reading among his Latin poems. So that it may be reckoned a peculiar felicity of the Marquis of Villa's life, to have been celebrated both by Tasso and Milton, the one the greatest modern poet of his own, and the other the greatest of foreign nations.

Having seen the finest parts of Italy, Milton was now thinking of passing over into Sicily and Greece, when he was diverted from his purpose by the news from England, that things were tending to a civil war between the King and Parliament: for he thought it unworthy of himself to be taking his pleasure abroad, while his countrymen were contending for liberty at home. He resolved therefore to return by the way of Rome, though he was advised to the contrary by the merchants, who had received intelligence from their correspondents, that the English Jesuits there were forming plots against him, in case he should return thither, by reason of the great freedom which he had used in all his discourses of religion. For he had by no means observed the rule, recommended to him by Sir Henry Wotton, of keeping his thoughts close and his countenance open. He had visited Galileo, a prisoner to the Inquisition, for asserting the motion of the earth, and thinking otherwise in astronomy than the Dominicans and Franciscans thought. And though the Marquis of Villa had shown him such distinguishing marks of favour at Naples, yet he told him at his departure that he would have shown him much greater, if he had been more reserved in matters of religion. But he had a soul above dissimulation and disguise; he was neither afraid nor ashamed to vindicate the truth; and if any man had, he had in him the spirit of an old martyr. He was so prudent indeed, that he would not of his own accord begin any discourse of religion; but at the same time he was so honest, that if he was questioned at all about his faith, he would not dissemble his sentiments, whatever was the consequence. And with this resolution he went to Rome the second time, and stayed there two months more, neither concealing his name, nor declining openly to defend the truth, if any thought proper to attack him: and yet, God's good providence protecting him, he came safe to his kind friends at Florence, where he was received with as much joy and affection as if he had returned into his own country.

Here likewise he stayed two months, as he had done before, excepting only an excursion of a few days to Lucca; and then crossing the Appenine, and passing through Bologna and Ferrara, he came to Venice, in which city he spent a month; and having shipped off the books which he had collected during his travels, and particularly a chest or two of choice music books of the best masters flourishing about that time in Italy, he took his course through Verona, Milan, and along the lake Leman to Geneva. In this city he tarried some time, meeting here with people of his own principles, and contracted an intimate friendship with Giovanni Deodati, the most learned professor of divinity, whose annotations upon the Bible are published in English. And from thence returning through France, the same way that he had gone before, he arrived safe in England, after a peregrination of one year and about three months, having seen more, and learned more, and conversed with more famous men, and made more real improvements, than most others in double the time.

His first business after his return was to pay his duty to his father, and to visit his other friends; but this pleasure was much diminished by the loss of his dear friend and schoolfellow Charles Deodati in his absence. While he was abroad, he heard it reported that he was dead; and upon his coming home he found it but too true, and lamented his death in an excellent Latin eclogue entitled Epitaphium Damonis. This Deodati had a father originally of Lucca, but his mother was English, and he was born and bred in England, and studied physic, and was an admirable scholar, and no less remarkable for his sobriety and other virtues than for his great learning and ingenuity. One or two of Milton's familiar epistles are addressed to him; and Mr. Toland says that he had in his hands two Greek letters of Deodati to Milton, very handsomely written. It may be right for scholars now and then to exercise themselves in Greek and Latin; but we have much more frequent occasion to write letters in our own native language, and in that therefore we should principally endeavour to excel.

Milton soon after his return, had taken a lodging at one Russel's, a taylor, in St. Bride's Churchyard; but he continued not long there, having not sufficient room for his library and furniture; and therefore determined to take a house, and accordingly took a handsome garden-house in Aldersgate street, situate at the end of an entry, which was the more agreeable to a studious man for its privacy and freedom from noise and disturbance. And in this house he continued several years, and his sister's two sons were put to board with him, first the younger and afterwards the elder: and some other of his intimate friends requested of him the same favour for their sons, especially since there was little more trouble in instructing half a dozen than two or three: and he, who could not easily deny any thing to his friends, and who knew that

the greatest men in all ages had delighted in teaching others the principles of knowledge and virtue, undertook the office, not out of any sordid and mercenary views, but more from a benevolent disposition, and a desire to do good. And his method of education was as much above the pedantry and jargon of the common schools, as his genius was superior to that of a common school-master. One of his nephews has given us an account of the many authors both Latin and Greek, which (besides those usually read in the schools) through his excellent judgment and way of teaching were run over within no greater compass of time, than from ten to fifteen or sixteen years of age. Of the Latin the four authors concerning husbandry, Cato, Varro, Columella, and Palladius, Cornelius Celsus the physician, a great part of Pliny's Natural History, the Architecture of Vitruvius, the Stratagems of Frontinus, and the philosophical poets Lucretius and Manilius. Of the Greek Hesiod, Aratus' Phænomena and Diosemeia, Dionysius Afer de situ orbis, Oppian's Cynegetics and Halieutics, Quintus Calaber's poem of the Trojan war continued from Homer, Apollonius Rhodius' Argonautics, and in prose, Plutarch's Placita philosophorum, and of the education of children, Xenophon's Cyropædia and Anabasis, Ælian's Tactics, and the stratagems of Polyænus. Nor did this application to the Greek and Latin tongues hinder the attaining to the chief oriental languages, the Hebrew, Chaldee and Syriac, so far as to go through the Pentateuch or five books of Moses in Hebrew, to make a good entrance into the Targum or Chaldee paraphrase, and to understand several chapters of St. Matthew in the Syriac Testament; besides the modern languages, Italian and French, and a competent knowledge of the mathematics and astronomy. The Sunday's exercise for his pupils was for the most part to read a chapter of Greek Testament, and to hear his learned exposition of it. The next work after this was to write from his dictation some part of a system of divinity, which he had collected from the ablest divines, who had written upon that subject. Such were his academic institutions; and thus by teaching others he in some measure enlarged his own knowledge; and having the reading of so many authors as it were by proxy, he might possibly have preserved his sight, if he had not moreover been perpetually busied in reading or writing something himself. It was certainly a very recluse and studious life, that both he and his pupils led; but the young men of that age were of a different turn from those of the present; and he himself gave an example to those under him of hard study and spare diet; only now and then, once in three weeks or a month, he made a gaudy day with some young gentlemen of his acquaintance the chief of whom, says Mr. Philips, were Mr. Alphry and Mr. Miller, both of Gray's Inn, and two of the greatest beaus of those times.

But he was not so fond of this academical life, as to be an indifferent spectator of what was acted upon the public stage of the world. The nation was now in a great ferment in 1641, and the clamour run high against the bishops, when he joined loudly in the cry, to help the puritan ministers, (as he says himself in his second Defence) they being inferior to the bishops in learning and eloquence; and published his two books, Of Reformation in England, written to a friend. About the same time certain ministers having published a treatise against episcopacy, in answer to the Humble Remonstrance of Dr. Joseph Hall, Bishop of Norwich, under the title of Smectymnuus, a word consisting of the initial letters of their names, Stephen Marshal, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstow; and Archbishop Usher having published at Oxford a refutation of Smectymnuus, in a tract concerning the original of Bishops and Metropolitans; Milton wrote his little piece Of Prelatical Episcopacy, in opposition chiefly to Usher, for he was for contending with the most powerful adversary; there would be either less disgrace in the defeat, or more glory in the victory. He handled the subject more at large in his next performance which was the Reason of Church Government urged against Prelacy, in two books. And Bishop Hall having published a Defence of the Humble Remonstrance, he wrote Animadversions upon it. All these treatises he published within the course of one year, 1641, which show how very diligent he was in the cause that he had undertaken. And the next year he set forth his Apology for Smectymnuus, in answer to the Confutation of his Animadversions, written as he thought himself by Bishop Hall, or his son. And here very luckily ended a controversy, which detained him from greater and better writings which he was meditating, more useful to the public, as well as more suitable to his own genius and inclination: but he thought all this while that he was vindicating ecclesiastical liberty.

In the year 1643, and the thirty-fifth year of his age, he married; and indeed his family was now growing so numerous, that it wanted a mistress at the head of it. His father, who had lived with his younger son at Reading, was, upon the taking of that place by the forces under the Earl of Essex, necessitated to come and live in London with this his elder son, with whom he continued in tranquillity and devotion to his dying day. Some addition too was to be made to the number of his pupils. But before his father or his new pupils were come, he took a journey in the Whitsuntide vacation, and after a month's absence returned with a wife, Mary the eldest daughter of Mr.

Richard Powell, of Foresthill, near Shotover in Oxfordshire, a justice of the peace, and a gentleman of good repute and figure in that county. But she had not cohabited with her husband above a month, before she was earnestly solicited by her relations to come and spend the remaining part of the summer with them in the country. If it was not at her instigation that her friends made this request, yet at least it was agreeable to her inclination; and she obtained her husband's consent upon a promise of returning at Michaelmas. And in the mean while his studies went on very vigorously; and his chief diversion, after the business of the day, was now and then in an evening to visit the Lady Margaret Lee, daughter of the Earl of Marlborough, Lord High Treasurer of England, and President of the Privy Council to King James I. This Lady, being a woman of excellent wit and understanding, had a particular honour for our author, and took great delight in his conversation; as likewise did her husband Captain Hobson, a very accomplished gentleman. And what a regard Milton again had for her, he has left upon record in a sonnet to her praise, extant among his other poems.

Michaelmas was now come, but he heard nothing of his wife's return. He wrote to her, but received no answer. He wrote again letter after letter, but received no answer to any of them. He then despatched a messenger with a letter, desiring her to return; but she positively refused, and dismissed the messenger with contempt. Whether it was, that she had conceived any dislike to her husband's person or humour; or whether she could not conform to his retired and philosophical manner of life, having been accustomed to a house of much gaiety and company; or whether being of a family strongly attached to the royal cause, she could not bear her husband's republican principles; or whether she was overpersuaded by her relations, who possibly might repent of having matched the eldest daughter of the family to a man so distinguished for taking the contrary party, the King's head-quarters being in their neighbourhood at Oxford, and his Majesty having now some fairer prospect of success; whether any or all of these were the reasons of this extraordinary behaviour; however it was, it so highly incensed her husband, that he thought it would be dishonourable ever to receive her again after such a repulse, and he determined to repudiate her as she had in effect repudiated him, and to consider her no longer as his wife. And to fortify this his resolution, and at the same time to justify it to the world, he wrote the Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce, wherein he endeavours to prove, that indisposition, unfitness, or contrariety of mind, proceeding from any unchangeable cause in nature, hindering and ever likely to hinder the main benefits of conjugal society, which are solace and peace, are greater reasons of divorce than adultery or natural frigidity, especially if there be no children, and there be mutual consent for separation. He published it at first without his name, but the style easily betrayed the author; and afterwards a second edition, much augmented, with his name; and he dedicated it to the Parliament of England with the Assembly of Divines, that as they were then consulting about the general reformation of the kingdom, they might also take this particular case of domestic liberty into their consideration. And then, as it was objected, that his doctrine was a novel notion, and a paradox that no body had ever asserted before, he endeavoured to confirm his own opinion by the authority of others, and published in 1644 the Judgment of Martin Bucer, &c.: and as it was still objected, that his doctrine could not be reconciled to Scripture, he published, in 1645, his Tetrachordon, or Expositions upon the four chief places in Scripture, which treat of marriage, or nullities in marriage. At the first appearing of the Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce the clergy raised a heavy outcry against it, and daily solicited the Parliament to pass some censure upon it; and at last one of them, in a sermon preached before the Lords and Commons on a day of humiliation in August, 1644, roundly told them that there was a book abroad, which deserved to be burned, and that among their other sins they ought to repent, that they had not yet branded it with some mark of their displeasure. And Mr. Wood informs us, that upon Milton's publishing his three books of Divorce, the Assembly of Divines, that was then sitting at Westminster, took special notice of them; and notwithstanding his former services in writing against the bishops, caused him to be summoned before the House of Lords: but that House, whether approving his doctrine, or not favouring his accusers, soon dismissed him. He was attacked too from the press as well as from the pulpit, in a pamphlet entitled Divorce at Pleasure, and in another entitled an Answer to the Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce, which was licensed and recommended by Mr. Joseph Caryl, a famous Presbyterian divine, and author of a voluminous commentary on the book of Job: and Milton, in his Colasterion or Reply, published in 1645, expostulates smartly with the licenser, as well as handles very roughly the nameless author. And these provocations, I suppose, contributed not a little to make him such an enemy to the Presbyterians, to whom he had before distinguished himself a friend. He composed likewise two of his sonnets on the reception his book of Divorce met with, but the latter is much the better of the two. To this account it may be added from Antony Wood, that after the King's restoration, when the subject of

divorce was under consideration with the Lords upon the account of John Lord Ross, or Roos, his separation from his wife Anne Pierpoint, eldest daughter to Henry, Marquis of Dorchester, he was consulted by an eminent member of that House, and about the same time by a chief officer of state, as being the prime person who was knowing in that affair.

But while he was engaged in this controversy of divorce, he was not so totally engaged in it, but he attended to other things; and about this time published his Letter of Education to Mr. Samuel Hartlib, who wrote some things about husbandry, and was a man of considerable learning, as appears from the letters which passed between him and the famous Mr. Mede, and from Sir William Petty's and Pell the mathematician's writing to him, the former his Treatise for the Advancement of some particular parts of Learning, and the latter his Idea of the Mathematics, as well as from this letter of our author. This letter of our author has usually been printed at the end of his poems, and is as I may say the theory of his own practice; and by the rules which he has laid down for education, we see in some measure the method that he pursued in educating his own pupils. And in 1644, he published his Areopagitica, or Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing to the Parliament of England. It was written at the desire of several learned men, and is perhaps the best vindication that has been published at any time or in any language, of that liberty which is the basis and support of all other liberties, the liberty of the press: but alas, it had not the desired effect; for the Presbyterians were as fond of exercising the licensing power, when they got it into their own hands, as they had been clamorous before in inveighing against it, while it was in the hands of the prelates. And Mr. Toland is mistaken in saying, "that such was the effect of this piece, that the following year Mabol, a licenser, offered reasons against licensing; and at his own request was discharged that office." For neither was the licenser's name Mabol, but Gilbert Mabbot; neither was he discharged from his office till May, 1649, about five years afterwards, though probably he might be swayed by Milton's arguments, as every ingenuous person must, who peruses and considers them. And in 1645, was published a collection of his poems, Latin and English, the principal of which are on the Morning of Christ's Nativity, L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, Lycidas, the Mask, &c. &c.: and if he had left no other monuments of his poetical genius behind him, these would have been sufficient to have rendered his name immortal.

But without doubt his Doctrine of Divorce and the maintenance of it principally engaged his thoughts at this period; and whether others were convinced or not at his arguments, he was certainly convinced himself that he was in the right; and as a proof of it he determined to marry again, and made his addresses to a young lady of great wit and beauty, one of the daughters of Dr. Davis. But intelligence of this coming to his wife, and the then declining state of the King's cause, and consequently of the circumstances of Justice Powell's family, caused them to set all engines on work to restore the wife again to her husband. And his friends too for different reasons seem to have been as desirous of bringing about a reconciliation as her's, and this method of effecting it was concerted between them. He had a relation, one Blackborough, living in the lane of St. Martin's Le Grand, whom he often visited; and one day when he was visiting there, it was contrived that the wife should be ready in another room; and as he was thinking of nothing less, he was surprised to see her, whom he had expected never to have seen any more, falling down upon her knees at his feet, and imploring his forgiveness with tears. At first he showed some signs of aversion, but he continued not long inexorable; his wife's intreaties, and the intercession of friends on both sides, soon wrought upon his generous nature, and procured a happy reconciliation with an act of oblivion of all that was past. But he did not take his wife home immediately; it was agreed that she should remain at a friend's, till the house that he had newly taken was fitted for their reception; for some other gentlemen of his acquaintance, having observed the great success of his method of education, had recommended their sons to his care; and his house in Aldersgate-street not being large enough, he had taken a larger in Barbican: and till this could be got ready, the place pitched upon for his wife's abode was the widow Webber's house in St. Clement's Churchyard, whose second daughter had been married to the other brother many years before. The part that Milton acted in this whole affair, showed plainly that he had a spirit capable of the strongest resentment, but yet more inclinable to pity and forgiveness: and neither in this was any injury done to the other lady, whom he was courting, for she is said to have been always averse from the motion, not daring I suppose to venture in marriage with a man who was known to have a wife still living. He might not think himself too at liberty as before, while his wife continued obstinate; for his most plausible argument for divorce proceeds upon a supposition, that the thing be done with mutual consent.

After his wife's return his family was increased not only with children, but also with his wife's relations, her father and mother, her brothers and sisters, coming to live with him in the general distress and ruin of the royal party: and he was so far from resenting their former ill treatment of him,

that he generously protected them, and entertained them very hospitably, till their affairs were accommodated through his interest with the prevailing faction. And then upon their removal, and the death of his own father, his house looked again like the house of the Muses; but his studies had like to have been interrupted by a call to public business; for about this time there was a design of constituting him Adjutant General in the army under Sir William Waller; but the new modelling of the army soon following, that design was laid aside. And not long after, his great house in Barbican being now too large for his family, he quitted it for a smaller in High Holborn, which opened backward into Lincoln's Inn Fields, where he prosecuted his studies till the King's trial and death, when the Presbyterians declaiming tragically against the King's execution, and asserting that his person was sacred and inviolable, provoked him to write the Tenure of Kings and Magistrates, proving that it is lawful to call a tyrant to account and to depose and put him to death, and that they who of late so much blame deposing are the men who did it themselves: and he published it at the beginning of the year 1649, to satisfy and compose the minds of the people. Not long after this he wrote his Observations on the Articles of Peace between the Earl of Ormond and the Irish Rebels. And in these and all his writings, whatever others of different parties may think, he thought himself an advocate for true liberty, for ecclesiastical liberty in his treatises against the bishops, for domestic liberty in his books of divorce, and for civil liberty in his writings against the king in defence of the parliament and people of England.

After this he retired again to his private studies; and thinking that he had leisure enough for such a work, he applied himself to the writing of a History of England, which he intended to deduce from the earliest accounts down to his own times: and he had finished four books of it, when neither courting nor expecting any such preferment, he was invited by the Council of State to be their Latin Secretary for foreign affairs. And he served in the same capacity under Oliver, and Richard, and the Rump, till the Restoration; and without doubt a better Latin pen could not have been found in the kingdom. For the Republic and Cromwell scorned to pay that tribute to any foreign Prince, which is usually paid to the French king, of managing their affairs in his language; they thought it an indignity and meanness to which this or any free nation ought not to submit; and took a noble resolution neither to write any letters to any foreign states, nor to receive any answers from them, but in the Latin tongue, which was common to them all.

But it was not only in foreign dispatches that the government made use of his pen. He had discharged the business of his office a very little time, before he was called to a work of another kind. For soon after the king's death was published a book under his name, entitled Εικων Βασιλικη, or the Royal Image: and this book, like Cæsar's last will, making a deeper impression, and exciting greater commiseration in the minds of the people, than the king himself did while alive, Milton was ordered to prepare an answer to it, which was published by authority, and entitled Εικονοκλαστης, or the Image-breaker, the famous surname of many Greek emperors, who, in their zeal against idolatry, broke all superstitious images to pieces. This piece was translated into French; and two replies to it were published, one in 1651, and the other in 1692, upon the reprinting of Milton's book at Amsterdam. In this controversy a heavy charge has been alleged against Milton. Some editions of the king's book have certain prayers added at the end, and among them a prayer in time of captivity, which is taken from that of Pamela in Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia: and it is said, that this prayer was added by the contrivance and artifice of Milton, who, together with Bradshaw, prevailed upon the printer to insert it, that from thence he might take occasion to bring a scandal upon the king, and to blast the reputation of his book, as he has attempted to do in the first section of his answer. This fact is related chiefly upon the authority of Henry Hills the printer, who had frequently affirmed it to Dr. Gill and Dr. Bernard, his physicians, as they themselves have testified. But Hills was not himself the printer, who was dealt with in this manner, and consequently he could have the story only from hearsay: and though he was Cromwell's printer, yet afterwards he turned papist in the reign of James II, in order to be that King's printer, and it was at that time that he used to relate this story; so that I think, little credit is due to his testimony. And indeed I can not but hope, and believe, that Milton had a soul above being guilty of so mean an action, to serve so mean a purpose; and there is as little reason for fixing it upon him, as he had to traduce the king for profaning the duty of prayer "with the polluted trash of Romances." For there are not many finer prayers in the best books of devotion; and the king might as lawfully borrow and apply it to his own occasions, as the Apostle might make quotations from Heathen poems and plays: and it became Milton the least of all men to bring such an accusation against the king, as he was himself particularly fond of reading romances, and has made use of them in some of the best and latest of his writings.

But his most celebrated work in prose is his Defence of the people of England against Salmasius, Defensio pro populo Anglicano contra Claudii Anonymi, alias Salmasia, Defensionem Regiam

Salmasius, by birth a Frenchman, succeeded the famous Scaliger as honorary Professor of the university of Leyden, and had gained great reputation by his Plinian Exercitations on Solinus, and by his critical remarks on several Latin and Greek authors, and was generally esteemed one of the greatest and most consummate scholars of that age: and is commended by Milton himself in his Reason of Church Government, and called the learned Salmasius. And besides his great learning he had extraordinary talents in railing. "This prince of scholars, as somebody said of him, seemed to have erected his throne upon a heap of stones, that he might have them at hand to throw at every one's head who passed by." He was, therefore, courted by Charles II, as the most able man to write a defence of the late king, his father, and to traduce his adversaries, and a hundred Jacobuses were given him for that purpose, and the book was published in 1649, with this title, Defensio Regia pro Carolo I. ad Carolum II. No sooner did this book appear in England, but the Council of State unanimously appointed Milton, who was then present, to answer it: and he performed the task with amazing spirit and vigour, though his health at that time was such, that he could hardly endure the fatigue of writing, and being weak in body he was forced to write by piece-meal, and to break off almost every hour, as he says himself in the introduction. This necessarily occasioned some delay, so that his Defence of the people of England was not made public till the beginning of the year 1651: and they who can not read the original, may yet have the pleasure of reading the English translation by Mr. Washington, of the Temple, which was printed in 1692, and is inserted among Milton's works in the two last editions. It was somewhat extraordinary, that Salmasius, a pensioner to a republic, should pretend to write a defence of monarchy, but the States showed their disapprobation by publicly condemning his book, and ordering it to be suppressed. And, on the other hand, Milton's book was burnt at Paris, and at Toulouse, by the hands of the common hangman; but this served only to procure it the more readers: it was read and talked of every where, and even they who were of different principles, yet could not but acknowledge that he was a good defender of a bad cause; and Salmasius's book underwent only one impression, while this of Milton passed through several editions. On the first appearance of it, he was visited or invited by all the foreign ministers at London, not excepting even those of crowned heads; and was particularly honoured and esteemed by Adrian Paaw, ambasssador from the States of Holland. He was likewise highly complimented by letters from the most learned and ingenious persons in France and Germany; and Leonard Philaras, an Athenian born, and ambassador from the Duke of Parma to the French king, wrote a fine encomium of his Defence, and sent him his picture, as appears from Milton's Letter to Philaras, dated at London, in June, 1652. And what gave him the greatest satisfaction, the work was highly applauded by those, who had desired him to undertake it; and they made him a present of a thousand pounds, which, in those days of frugality, was reckoned no inconsiderable reward for his performance. But the case was far otherwise with Salmasius. He was then in high favour at the court of Christina, Queen of Sweden, who had invited thither several of the most learned men of all countries: but when Milton's Defence of the People of England was brought to Sweden, and was read to the Queen at her own desire, he sunk immediately in her esteem, and the opinion of every body; and though he talked big at first, and vowed the destruction of Milton and the Parliament, yet finding that he was looked upon with coldness, he thought proper to take leave of the court; and he who came in honour, was dismissed with contempt. He died some time afterwards at Spa, in Germany, and, it is said, more of a broken heart than of any distemper, leaving a posthumous reply to Milton, which was not published till after the Restoration, and was dedicated to Charles II. by his son Claudius; but it has done no great honour to his memory, abounding with abuse much more than argument.

Isaac Vossius was at Stockholm, when Milton's book was brought thither, and in some of his letters to Nicholas Heinsius, published by Professor Burman in the third tome of his Sylloge Epistolarum, he says, that he had the only copy of Milton's book, that the Queen borrowed it of him, and was very much pleased with it, and commended Milton's wit and manner of writing in the presence of several persons, and that Salmasius was very angry, and very busy in preparing his answer, wherein he abused Milton as if he had been one of the vilest catamites in Italy, and also criticised his Latin poems. Heinsius writes again to Vossius from Holland, that he wondered that only one copy of Milton's book was brought to Stockholm, when three were sent thither, one to the Queen, another to Vossius which he had received, and the third to Salmasius; that the book was in every body's hands, and there had been four editions in a few months besides the English one; that a Dutch translation was handed about, and a French one was expected. And afterwards he writes from Venice, that Holstenius had lent him Milton's Latin poems; that they were nothing, compared with the elegance of his Apology; that he had offended frequently against prosody, and here was a great opening for Salmasius' criticism: but as to Milton's having been a catamite in Italy, he says, that it was a mere calumny; on the contrary, he

was disliked by the Italians, for the severity of his manners, and for the freedom of his discourses against popery. And in others of his letters to Vosssius and to J. Fr. Gronovius from Holland, Heinsius mentions how angry Salmasius was with him for commending Milton's book, and says that Graswinkelius had written something against Milton, which was to have been printed by Elzever, but it was suppressed by public authority.

The first reply that appeared was published in 1651, and entitled an Apology for the king and people, &c. Apologia pro rege et populo Anglicano contra Johannis Polipragmatici (alias Miltoni Angli) Defensionem destructivam regis et populi Anglicani. It is not known, who was the author of this piece. Some attribute it to one Janus, a lawyer of Gray's Inn, and others to Dr. John Bramhall, who was then Bishop of Derry, and was made Primate of Ireland after the restoration: but it is utterly improbable, that so mean a performance, written in such barbarous Latin, and so full of solecisms, should come from the hands of a prelate of such distinguished abilities and learning. But whoever was the author of it, Milton did not think it worth his while to animadvert upon it himself, but employed the younger of his nephews to answer it; but he supervised and corrected the answer so much before it went to the press, that it may in a manner be called his own. It came forth in 1652 under this title, Johannis Philippi Angli Responsio ad Apologiam anonymi cujusdam tenebrionis pro rege et populo Anglicano infantissimam; and it is printed with Milton's works; and throughout the whole Mr. Philips treats Bishop Bramhall with great severity as the author of the Apology, thinking probably that so considerable an adversary would make the answer more considerable.

Sir Robert Filmer likewise published some animadversions upon Milton's Defence of the people, in a piece printed in 1652, and entitled Observations concerning the original of government, upon Mr. Hobbes' Leviathan, Mr. Milton against Salmasius, and Hugo Grotius de Jure belli: but I do not find that Milton or any of his friends took any notice of it; but Milton's quarrel was afterwards sufficiently avenged by Mr. Locke, who wrote against Sir Robert Filmer's principles of government, more I suppose in condescension to the prejudices of the age, than out of any regard to the weight or importance of Filmer's arguments.

It is probable that Milton, when he was first made Latin Secretary, removed from his house in High Holborn to be nearer Whitehall: and for some time he had lodgings at one Thomson's, next door to the Bull-head tavern at Charing Cross, opening into Spring-garden, till the apartment, appointed for him in Scotland-Yard, could be got ready for his reception. He then removed thither; and there his third child, a son was born, and named John, who through the ill usage or bad constitution of the nurse died an infant. His own health was too greatly impaired; and for the benefit of the air, he removed from his apartment in Scotland-Yard to a house in Petty-France Westminster, which was next door to Lord Scudamore's, and opened into St. James' Park; and there he remained eight years, from the year 1652 till within a few weeks of the King's restoration. In this house he had not been settled long, before his first wife died in child-bed; and his condition requiring some care and attendance, he was easily induced after a proper interval of time to marry a second, who was Catharine, daughter of Captain Woodcock, of Hackney: and she too died in child-bed within a year after their marriage, and her child, who was a daughter, died in a month after her; and her husband has done honour to her memory in one of his sonnets.

Two or three years before this second marriage he had totally lost his sight. And his enemies triumphed in his blindness, and imputed it as a judgment upon him for writing against the King: but his sight had been decaying several years before, through his close application to study, and the frequent head-aches to which he had been subject from his childhood, and his continual tampering with physic, which perhaps was more pernicious than all the rest: and he himself has informed us in his second Defence, that when he was appointed by authority to write his Defence of the people against Salmasius, he had almost lost the sight of one eye, and the physicians declared to him, that if he undertook that work, he would also lose the sight of the other: but he was nothing discouraged, and chose rather to lose both his eyes than desert what he thought his duty. It was the sight of his left eye that he lost first: and at the desire of his friend Leonard Philaras, the Duke of Parma's minister at Paris, he sent him a particular account of his case, and of the manner of his growing blind, for him to consult Thevenot the physician, who was reckoned famous in cases of the eyes. The letter is the fifteenth of his familiar epistles, is dated September 28th, 1654; and is thus translated by Mr. Richardson.

"Since you advise me not to fling away all hopes of recovering my sight, for that you have a friend at Paris, Thevenot the physician, particularly famous for the eyes, whom you offer to consult in my behalf if you receive from me an account by which he may judge of the causes and symptoms of my disease, I will do what you advice me to, that I may not seem to refuse any assistance that is offered, perhaps from God.

"I think it is about ten years, more or less since I began to perceive that my eye-sight grew weak

and dim, and at the same time my spleen and bowels to be oppressed and troubled with flatus; and in the morning when I began to read, according to custom, my eyes grew painful immediately, and to refuse reading, but were refreshed after a moderate exercise of the body. A certain iris began to surround the light of the candle if I looked at it; soon after which, on the left part of the left eye (for that was some years sooner clouded) a mist arose which hid every thing on that side; and looking forward if I shut my right eye, objects appeared smaller. My other eye also, for these last three years, failing by degrees, some months before all sight was abolished, things which I looked upon seemed to swim to the right and left; certain inverate vapours seem to possess my forehead and temples, which after meat especially, quite to evening, generally, urge and depress my eyes with a sleepy heaviness. Nor would I omit that whilst there was as yet some remainder of sight, I no sooner lay down in my bed, and turned on my side, but a copious light dazzled out of my shut eyes; and as my sight diminished every day, colours gradually more obscure flashed out with vehemence; but now that the lucid is in a manner wholly extinct, a direct blackness, or else spotted, and, as it were, woven with ash-colour, is used to pour itself in. Nevertheless the constant and settled darkness that is before me as well by night as by day, seems nearer to the whitish than the blackish; and the eye rolling itself a little, seems to admit I know not what little smallness of light as through a chink.'

But it does not appear what answer he received; we may presume, none that administered any relief. His blindness however did not disable him entirely from performing the business of his office. An assistant was allowed him, and his salary as secretary still continued to him.

And there was farther occasion for his service besides dictating of letters. For the controversy with Salmasius did not die with him, and there was published at the Hague, in 1652, a book entitled the Cry of the King's Blood, &c., Regii sanguinis Clamor ad cœlum adversus Parricidas Anglicanos. The true author of this book was Peter du Moulin, the younger, who was afterwards prebendary of Canterbury: and he transmitted his papers to Salmasius; and Salmasius intrusted them to the care of Alexander Morus, a French minister; and Morus published them with a dedication to King Charles II. in the name of Adrian Ulac, the printer, from whence he came to be reputed the author of the whole. This Morus was the son of a learned Scotsman, who was president of the college, which the Protestants had formerly at Castres in Languedoc; and he is said to have been a man of a most haughty disposition, and immoderately addicted to women, hasty, ambitious, full of himself and his own performances, and satirical upon all others. He was however esteemed one of the most eminent preachers of that age among the Protestants; but as Monsieur Bayle observes, his chief talent must have consisted in the gracefulness of his delivery, or in those sallies of imagination and quaint turns and allusions, whereof his sermons are full; for they retain not those charms in reading, which they were said to have formerly in the pulpit. Against this man, therefore, as the reputed author of Regii sanguinis Clamor, &c., Milton published by authority his Second Defence of the people of England, Defensio Secunda pro populo Anglicano, in 1654, and treats Morus with such severity as nothing could have excused, if he had not been provoked to it by so much abuse poured upon himself. There is one piece of his wit, which had been published before in the newspapers at London, a distich upon Morus for getting Pontia the maid-servant of his friend Salmasius with child.

Galli ex concubitu gravidam te, Pontia, Mori
Quis bene moratam morigeramque neget?

Upon this Morus published his Fides Publica in answer to Milton, in which he inserted several testimonies of his orthodoxy and morals, signed by the consistories, academies, synods, and magistrates of the places where he had lived; and disowned his being the author of the book imputed to him, and appealed to two gentlemen of great credit with the Parliament party, who knew the real author. This brought Du Moulin, who was then in England, into great danger; but the government suffered him to escape with impunity, rather than they would publicly contradict the great patron of their cause. For he still persisted in his accusation, and endeavoured to make it good in his Defence of himself, Autoris pro se Defensio, which was published in 1655, wherein he opposed to the testimonies in favour of Morus other testimonies against him; and Morus replied no more.

After this controversy was ended, he was at leisure again to pursue his own private studies, which were the History of England before mentioned, and a new Thesaurus of the Latin tongue, intended as an improvement upon that by Robert Stephens; a work which he had been long collecting from the best and purest Latin authors, and continued at times almost to his dying day: but his papers were left so confused and imperfect, that they could not be fitted for the press, though great use was made of them by the compilers of the Cambridge Dictionary, printed in 1693. These papers are said to have consisted of three large volumes in folio; and it is a great pity that they are lost, and no account is given what is become of the manuscript. It is commonly said too that at this time he began his famous

poem of Paradise Lost; and it is certain, that he was glad to be released from those controversies, which detained him so long from following things more agreeable to his natural genius and inclination, though he was far from ever repenting of his writings in defence of liberty, but gloried in them to the last.

The only interruption now of his private studies was the business of his office. In 1655, there was published in Latin a writing in the name of the Lord Protector, setting forth the reasons of the war with Spain: and this piece is rightly adjudged to our author, both on account of the peculiar elegance of the style, and because it was his province to write such things as Latin secretary; and it is printed among his other prose works in the last edition. And for the same reasons I am inclined to think, that the famous Latin verses to Christina, Queen of Sweden, in the name of Cromwell, were made by our author rather than Andrew Marvel. In those days they had admirable intelligence in the secretary's office; and Mr. Philips relates a memorable instance or two upon his own knowledge. The Dutch were sending a plenipotentiary to England to treat of peace; but the emissaries of the government had the art to procure a copy of his instructions in Holland, which were delivered by Milton to his kinsman, who was then with him, to translate them for the use of the Council, before the said plenipotentiary had taken shipping for England; and an answer to all that he had in charge was prepared, and lay ready for him before he made his public entry into London. Another time a person came to London with a very sumptuous train, pretending himself an agent from the Prince of Conde, who was then in arms against Cardinal Mazarine: but the government suspecting him, set their instruments to work so successfully, that in a few days they received intelligence from Paris, that he was a spy employed by Charles II.: whereupon the very next morning Milton's kinsman was sent to him with an order of Council, commanding him to depart the kingdom within three days, or expect the punishment of a spy. This kinsman was in all probability Mr. Philips or his brother, who were Milton's nephews, and lived very much with him, and one or both of them were assistant to him in his office. His blindness no doubt was a great hindrance and inconvenience to him in his business, though sometimes a political use might be made of it; as men's natural infirmities are often pleaded in excuse for not doing what they have no great inclination to do. Thus when Cromwell, as we may collect from Whitlock, for some reasons delayed artfully to sign the treaty concluded with Sweden, and the Swedish ambassador made frequent complaints of it, it was excused to him, because Mr. Milton, on account of his blindness, proceeded slower in business, and had not yet put the articles of the treaty into Latin. Upon which the ambassador was greatly surprised, that things of such consequence should be entrusted to a blind man, for he must necessarily employ an amanuensis, and that amanuensis might divulge the articles; and said that it was very wonderful, that there should be only one man in England who could write Latin, and he a blind one. But his blindness had not diminished, but rather increased the vigour of his mind; and his state-letters will remain as authentic memorials of those times, to be admired equally by critics and politicians; and those particularly about the sufferings of the poor Protestants in Piedmont, who can read without sensible emotion? This was a subject he had very much at heart, as he was an utter enemy to all sorts of persecution; and among his sonnets there is a most excellent one upon the same occasion.

But Oliver Cromwell being dead, and the government weak and unsettled in the hands of Richard and the Parliament, he thought it a seasonable time to offer his advice again to the public; and in 1659 published a Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical causes; and another tract entitled Considerations touching the likeliest Means to remove Hirelings out of the Church; both addressed to the Parliament of the commonwealth of England. And after the parliament was dissolved, he wrote a letter to some statesman, with whom he had a serious discourse the night before, concerning the ruptures of the commonwealth; and another, as it is supposed, to General Monk, being a brief delineation of a free commonwealth, easy to be put in practice, and without delay. These two pieces were communicated in manuscript to Mr. Toland by a friend who a little after Milton's death had them from his nephew; and Mr. Toland gave them to be printed in the edition of our author's prose-works in 1698. But Milton, still finding that affairs were every day tending more and more to the subversion of the commonwealth, and the restoration of the royal family, published his Ready and Easy Way to establish a Free Commonwealth, and the excellence thereof, compared with the inconveniences and dangers of readmitting kingship in this nation. We are informed by Mr. Wood that he published this piece in February 1659-60; and after this he published Brief Notes upon a late Sermon, entitled, The Fear of God and the King, preached by Dr. Matthew Griffith at Mercer's Chapel, March 25, 1660: so bold and resolute was he in declaring his sentiments to the last, thinking that his voice was the voice of expiring liberty.

A little before the King's landing, he was discharged from his office of Latin Secretary, and was forced to leave his house in Petty France, where

he had lived eight years with great reputation, and had been visited by all foreigners of note, who could not go out of the country without seeing a man who did so much honour to it by his writings, and whose name was as well known and as famous abroad as in his own nation; and by several persons of quality of both sexes, particularly the pious and virtuous Lady Ranelagh, whose son for some time he instructed, the same who was paymaster of the forces in King William's time; and by many learned and ingenious friends and acquaintance, particularly Andrew Marvel, and young Laurence, son to the President of Oliver's Council, to whom he has inscribed one of his sonnets, and Marchamont Needham, the writer of Politicus, and above all, Cyriac Skinner, whom he has honoured with two sonnets. But now it was not safe for him to appear any longer in public, so that by the advice of some who wished him well and were concerned for his preservation, he fled for shelter to a friend's house in Bartholomew Close, near West Smithfield, where he lay concealed till the worst of the storm was blown over. The first notice that we find taken of him was on Saturday the 16th of June, 1660, when it was ordered by the House of Commons, that his Majesty should be humbly moved to issue his proclamation for the calling in of Milton's two books, his Defence of the People, and Iconoclastes, and also Goodwyn's book entitled the Obstructors of Justice, written in justification of the murder of the late king, and to order them to be burnt by the hands of the common hangman. At the same time it was ordered that the Attorney General should proceed by way of indictment or information against Milton and Goodwyn in respect of their books, and that they themselves should be sent for in custody of the Serjeant-at-arms attending the House. On Wednesday, June 27th, an order of Council was made agreeable to the order of the House of Commons for a proclamation against Milton's and Goodwyn's books; and the proclamation was issued the 13th of August following, wherein it was said that the authors had fled or did abscond: and on Monday, August 27th, Milton's and Goodwyn's books were burnt, according to the proclamation, at the Old Bailey, by the hands of the common hangman. On Wednesday, August 29th, the act of indemnity was passed, which proved more favourable to Milton than could well have been expected; for though John Goodwyn Clerk was excepted among the twenty persons who were to have penalties inflicted upon them, not extending to life, yet Milton was not excepted at all, and consequently was included in the general pardon. We find indeed that afterwards he was in custody of the Serjeant-at-arms; but the time when he was taken into custody is not certain. He was not in custody on the 12th of September, for that day a list of the prisoners in custody of the Serjeant-at-arms was read in the House, and Milton is not among them; and on the 13th of September the House adjourned to the 6th of November. It is most probable, therefore, that after the act or indemnity was passed, and after the House had adjourned, he came out of his concealment, and was afterwards taken into custody of the Serjeant-at-arms by virtue of the former order of the House of Commons, but we can not find that he was prosecuted by the Attorney General, nor was he continued in custody very long: for on Saturday the 15th of December 1660, it was ordered by the House of Commons, that Mr. Milton now in custody of the Serjeant-at-arms, should be forthwith released, paying his fees; and on Monday the 17th of December, a complaint being made that the Serjeant-at-arms had demanded excessive fees for his imprisonment, it was referred to the committee of privileges and elections to examine this business, and to call Mr. Milton and the Serjeant before them, and to determine what was fit to be given to the Serjeant for his fees in this case; so courageous was he at all times in defence of liberty against all the encroachments of power, and though a prisoner, would yet be treated like a freeborn Englishman. This appears to be the matter of fact, as it may be collected partly from the Journals of the House of Commons, and partly from Kennet's Historical Register: and the clemency of the government was surely very great towards him, considering the nature of his offences; for though he was not one of the King's judges and murderers, yet he contributed more to murder his character and reputation than any of them all: and to what therefore could it be owing, that he was treated with such lenity, and was so easily pardoned? It is certain, there was not wanting powerful intercession for him both in Council and in Parliament. It is said that Secretary Morrice and Sir Thomas Clargis greatly favoured him, and exerted their interest in his behalf; and his old friend Andrew Marvel, member of Parliament for Hull, formed a considerable party for him in the House of Commons; and neither was Charles the Second (as Toland says) such an enemy to the Muses, as to require his destruction. But the principal instrument in obtaining Milton's pardon was Sir William Davenant, out of gratitude for Milton's having procured his release, when he was taken prisoner in 1650. It was life for life. Davenant had been saved by Milton's interest, and in return Milton was saved at Davenant's intercession. This story Mr. Richardson relates upon the authority of Mr. Pope; and Mr. Pope had it from Betterton the famous actor, who was first brought upon the stage and patronised by Sir William Davenant, and might therefore derive the knowledge of this transaction from the fountain.

Milton having thus obtained his pardon, and being set at liberty again, took a house in Holborn, near Red Lion Fields; but he removed soon into Jewen street, near Aldersgate street, and while he lived there, being in his 53d or 54th year, and blind and infirm, and wanting somebody better than servants to attend and look after him, he employed his friend Dr. Paget to choose a proper consort for him; and at his recommendation married his third wife, Elizabeth Minshul, of a gentleman's family in Cheshire, and related to Dr. Paget. It is said that an offer was made to Milton, as well as to Thurloe, of holding the same place of Secretary under the king, which he had discharged with so much integrity and ability under Cromwell; but he persisted in refusing it, though the wife pressed his compliance. "Thou art in the right," said he; "you, as other women, would ride in your coach; for me, my aim is to live and die an honest man." What is more certain is, that in 1661 he published his Accedence commenced Grammar, and a tract of Sir Walter Raleigh, entitled, Aphorisms of State; as in 1658 he had published another piece of Sir Walter Raleigh, entitled, The Cabinet Council discabinated, which he printed from a manuscript, that had lain many years in his hands, and was given him for a true copy by a learned man at his death, who had collected several such pieces: an evident sign, that he thought it no mean employment, nor unworthy of a man of genius, to be an editor of the works of great authors. It was while he lived in Jewen street, that Elwood, the quaker, (as we learn from the history of his life written by his own hand) was first introduced to read to him; for having wholly lost his sight, he kept always somebody or other to perform that office, and usually the son of some gentleman of his acquaintance, whom he took in kindness, that he might at the same time improve him in his learning. Elwood was recommended to him by Dr. Paget, and went to his house every afternoon, except Sunday, and read to him such books in the Latin tongue, as Milton thought proper. And Milton told him, that if he would have the benefit of the Latin tongue, not only to read and understand Latin authors, but to converse with foreigners either abroad or at home, he must learn the foreign pronunciation; and he instructed him how to read accordingly. And having a curious ear, he understood by my tone, says Elwood, when I understood what I read, and when I did not; and he would stop me, and examine me, and open the most difficult passages to me. But it was not long after his third marriage, that he left Jewen street, and removed to a house in the Artillery Walk, leading to Bunhill Fields: and this was his last stage in this world; he continued longer in this house than he had done in any other, and lived here to his dying day: only when the plague began to rage in London in 1665, he removed to a small house at St. Giles Chalfont, in Buckinghamshire, which Elwood had taken for him and his family; and there he remained during that dreadful calamity; but after the sickness was over, and the city was cleansed and made safely habitable again, he returned to his house in London.

His great work of Paradise Lost, had principally engaged his thoughts for some years past, and was now completed. It is probable, that his first design of writing an epic poem was owing to his conversations at Naples with the Marquis of Villa, about Tasso, and his famous poem of the Delivery of Jerusalem; and in a copy of verses presented to that nobleman before he left Naples, he intimated his intention of fixing upon king Arthur for his hero. And in an eclogue, made soon after his return to England, upon the death of his friend and school-fellow Deodati, he proposed the same design and the same subject, and declared his ambition of writing something in his native language, which might render his name illustrious in these islands, though he should be obscure and inglorious to the rest of the world. And in other parts of his works, after he had engaged in the controversies of the times, he still promised to produce some noble poem or other at a fitter season; but it does not appear that he had then determined upon the subject, and king Arthur had another fate, being reserved for the pen of Sir Richard Blackmore. The first hint of Paradise Lost is said to have been taken from an Italian tragedy; and it is certain, that he first designed it a tragedy himself, and there are several plans of it in the form of a tragedy still to be seen in the author's own manuscript preserved in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge. And it is probable, that he did not barely sketch out the plans, but also wrote some parts of the drama itself. His nephew, Philips, informs us, that some of the verses at the beginning of Satan's speech, addressed to the sun, in the fourth book, were shown to him and some others as designed for the beginning of the tragedy, several years before the poem was begun: and many other passages might be produced, which plainly appear to have been originally intended for the scene, and are not so properly of the epic, as of the tragic strain. It was not till after he was disengaged from the Salmasian controversy, which ended in 1655, that he began to mould the Paradise Lost in its present form; but after the Restoration, when he was dismissed from public business, and freed from controversy of every kind, he prosecuted the work with closer application. Mr. Philips relates a very remarkable circumstance in the composure of this poem, which he says he had reason to remember, as it was told him by Milton himself, that his vein never happily flowed but from the autumnal equinox

to the vernal, and that what he attempted at other times was not to his satisfaction, though he courted his fancy never so much. Mr. Toland imagines that Philips might be mistaken as to the time, because our author, in his Latin elegy, written in his twentieth year, upon the approach of the spring, seems to say just the contrary, as if he could not make any verses to his satisfaction till the spring begun: and he says farther, that a judicious friend of Milton's informed him, that he could never compose well but in spring and autumn. But Mr. Richardson can not comprehend, that either of these accounts is exactly true, or that a man with such a work in his head can suspend it for six months together, or only for one; it may go on more slowly, but it must go on: and this laying it aside is contrary to that eagerness to finish what was begun, which he says was his temper, in his epistle to Deodati, dated Sept. 2, 1637. After all Mr. Philips, who had the perusal of the poem from the beginning, by twenty or thirty verses at a time, as it was composed, and having not been shown any for a considerable while as the summer came on, inquired of the author the reason of it, could hardly be mistaken with regard to the time: and it is easy to conceive, that the poem might go on much more slowly in summer than in other parts of the year; for, notwithstanding all that poets may say of the pleasures of that season, I imagine most persons find by experience, that they can compose better at any other time, with more facility and more spirit, than during the heat and languor of summer. Whenever the poem was written, it was finished in 1665, and, as Elwood says, was shown to him that same year at St. Giles Chalfont, whither Milton had retired to avoid the plague, and it was lent to him to peruse it, and give his judgment of it; and, considering the difficulties which the author lay under, his uneasiness on account of the public affairs and his own, his age and infirmities, his gout and blindness, his not being in circumstances to maintain an amanuensis, but obliged to make use of any hand that came next to write his verses as he made them, it is really wonderful, that he should have the spirit to undertake such a work, and much more, that he should ever bring it to perfection. And after the poem was finished, still new difficulties retarded the publication of it. It was in danger of being suppressed through the malice or ignorance of the licencer, who took exception at some passages, and particularly at that noble simile, in the first book, of the sun in an eclipse, in which he fancied that he had discovered treason. It was with difficulty too that the author could sell the copy; and he sold it at last only for five pounds, but was to receive five pounds more after the sale of thirteen hundred of the first impression, and five pounds more after the sale of as many of the second impression, and five more after the sale of as many of the third, and the number was not to exceed fifteen hundred. And what a poor compensation was this for such an inestimable performance! and how much more do others get by the works of great authors, than the authors themselves! This original contract with Samuel Simmons, the printer, is dated April 27, 1667, and is in the hands of Mr. Tonson, the bookseller, as is likewise the manuscript of the first book copied fair for the press, with the Imprimatur, by Thomas Tomkyns, chaplain to the Archbishop of Canterbury: so that, though Milton was forced to make use of different hands to write his verses from time to time as he had occasion, yet we may suppose that the copy for the press was written all, or at least each book by the same hand. The first edition, in ten books, was printed in a small quarto; and before it could be disposed of, had three or more different title pages of the years 1667, 1668, and 1669. The first sort was without the name of Symmons, the printer, and began with the poem immediately following the title page, without any argument, or preface, or table of errata: to others was prefixed a short advertisement of the printer to the reader concerning the argument, and the reason why the poem rhymes not; and then followed the argument of the several books, and the preface concerning the kind of verse, and the table of errata: others again had the argument, and the preface, and the table of errata, without that short advertisement of the printer to the reader: and this was all the difference between them, except now and then of a point or a letter, which were altered as the sheets were printing off. So that, notwithstanding these variations, there was still only one impression in quarto; and two years almost elapsed, before thirteen hundred copies could be sold, or before the author was entitled to his second five pounds, for which his receipt is still in being, and is dated April 26, 1669. And this was probably all that he received; for he lived not to enjoy the benefits of the second edition, which was not published till the year 1674, and that same year he died. The second edition was printed in a small octavo, and was corrected by the author himself, and the number of books was augmented from ten to twelve, with the addition of some few verses: and this alteration was made with great judgment, not for the sake of such a fanciful beauty as resembling the number of books in the Æneid, but for the more regular disposition of the poem, because the seventh and tenth books were before too long, and are more fitly divided each into two. The third edition was published in 1678; and it appears that Milton had left his remaining right in the copy to his widow, and she agreed with Simmons, the printer, to accept eight pounds in full of all demands, and her receipt for the money is dated December 21, 1680. But a little before

this Simmons had covenanted to assign the whole right of copy to Brabazon Aylmer, the bookseller, for twenty-five pounds; and Aylmer afterwards sold it to old Jacob Tonson at two different times, one half on the 17th of August, 1683, and the other half on the 24th of March, 1690, with a considerable advance of the price: and except one fourth of it which has been assigned to several persons, his family have enjoyed the right of copy ever since. By the last assignment it appears that the book was growing into repute and rising in valuation; and to what perverseness could it be owing that it was not better received at first? We conceive there were principally two reasons; the prejudices against the author on account of his principles and party; and many, no doubt, were offended with the novelty of a poem that was not in rhyme. Rymer, who was a redoubted critic in those days, would not so much as allow it to be a poem on this account; and declared war against Milton as well as against Shakspeare; and threatened that he would write reflections upon the Paradise Lost, which some (says he*) are pleased to call a poem, and would assert against the slender sophistry wherewith the author attacks it. And such a man as Bishop Burnet makes it a sort of objection to Milton, that he affected to write in blank verse without rhyme. And the same reason induced Dryden to turn the principal parts of Paradise Lost into rhyme in his Opera called the State of Innocence and Fall of Man; to tag his lines, as Milton himself expressed it, alluding to the fashion then of wearing tags of metal at the end of their ribbons.

We are told indeed by Mr. Richardson, that Sir George Hungerford, an ancient member of Parliament, told him, that Sir John Denham came into the House one morning with a sheet of Paradise Lost wet from the press in his hand; and being asked what he had there, said that he had part of the noblest poem that ever was written in any language or in any age. However it is certain that the book was unknown till about two years after, when the Earl of Dorset produced it, as Mr. Richardson was informed by Dr. Tancred Robinson, the physician, who had heard the story often from Fleetwood Shepherd himself, that the Earl, in company with Mr. Shepherd, looking about for books in Little Britain, accidentally met with Paradise Lost; and being surprised at some passages in dipping here and there, he bought it. The bookseller begged his Lordship to speak in its favour if he liked it, for the impression lay on his hands as waste paper. The Earl having read it sent it to Dryden, who in a short time returned it with this answer, "This man cuts us all out and the ancients too." Dryden's epigram upon Milton is too well known to be repeated, and those Latin verses by Dr. Barrow the physician, and the English ones by Andrew Marvel, Esq. usually prefixed to the Paradise Lost, were written before the second edition, and were published with it. But still the poem was not generally known and esteemed, nor met with the deserved applause, till after the edition in folio, which was published in 1688 by subscription. The Duke of Buckingham in his Essay on poetry prefers Tasso and Spencer to Milton: and it is related in the life of the witty Earl of Rochester, that he had no notion of a better poet than Cowley. In 1686 or thereabout Sir William Temple published the second part of his Miscellanies, and it may surprise any reader, that in his Essay on Poetry he takes no notice at all of Milton; nay he says expressly that after Ariosto, Tasso, and Spenser, he knows none of the Moderns who have made any achievements in heroic poetry worth recording. And what can we think, that he had not read or heard of the Paradise Lost, or that the author's politics had prejudiced him against his poetry? It was happy that all great men were not of his mind. The bookseller was advised and encouraged to undertake the folio edition by Mr. Sommers, afterwards Lord Sommers, who not only subscribed himself, but was zealous in promoting the subscription: and in the list of subscribers we find some of the most eminent names of that time, as the Earl of Dorset, Waller, Dryden, Dr. Aldrich, Mr. Atterbury, and among the rest Sir Roger Lestrange, though he had formerly written a piece entitled No blind guides, &c. against Milton's Notes upon Dr. Griffith's sermon. There were two editions more in folio, one I think in 1692, the other in 1695, which was the sixth edition; for the poem was now so well received, that notwithstanding the price of it was four times greater than before, the sale increased double the number every year; as the bookseller, who should best know, has informed us in his dedication of the smaller editions to Lord Sommers. Since that time not only various editions have been printed, but also various notes and translations. The first person who wrote annotations upon Paradise Lost was P. H. or Patrick Hume, of whom we know nothing, unless his name may lead us to some knowledge of his country, but he has the merit of being the first (as I say) who wrote notes upon Paradise Lost, and his notes were printed at the end of the folio edition in 1695. Mr. Addison's Spectators upon the subject contributed not a little to establishing the character, and illustrating the beauties of the poem. In 1732 appeared Dr. Bentley's new edition with notes: and the year following Dr. Pearce published his Review of the text, in which the chief of Dr. Bentley's emendations are considered, and several other emendations and observations are offered to the

* See Rymer's "Tragedies of the last age considered." p. 143.

public. And the year after that Messieurs Richardson, father and son, published their Explanatory notes and remarks. The poem has also been translated into several languages, Latin, Italian, French, and Dutch; and proposals have been made for translating it into Greek. The Dutch translation is in blank verse, and printed at Harlem. The French have a translation by Mons. Dupré de St. Maur; but nothing shows the weakness and imperfection of their language more, than that they have few or no good poetical versions of the greatest poets; they are forced to translate Homer, Virgil, and Milton into prose: and blank verse their language has not harmony and dignity enough to support; their tragedies, and many of their comedies are in rhyme. Rolli, the famous Italian master here in England, made an Italian translation; and Mr. Richardson the son, saw another at Florence in manuscript by the learned Abbé Salvini, the same who translated Addison's Cato into Italian. One William Hog or Hogæus translated Paradise Lost, Paradise Regained, and Samson Agonistes into Latin verse in 1690; but this version is very unworthy of the originals. There is a better translation of the Paradise Lost by Mr. Thomas Power, Fellow of Trinity College, in Cambridge, the first book of which was printed in 1691, and the rest in manuscript is in the library of that College. The learned Dr. Trap has also published a translation into Latin verse; and the world is in expectation of another, that will surpass all the rest, by Mr. William Dobson, of New College, in Oxford. So that by one means or other Milton is now considered as an English classic; and the Paradise Lost is generally esteemed the noblest and most sublime of modern poems, and equal at least to the best of the ancient; the honour of this country, and the envy and admiration of all others!

In 1670 he published his History of Britain, that part especially now called England. He began it above twenty years before, but was frequently interrupted by other avocations; and he designed to have brought it down to his own times, but stopped at the Norman conquest; for indeed he was not well able to pursue it any farther by reason of his blindness, and he was engaged in other more delightful studies; having a genius turned for poetry rather than history. When his History was printed, it was not printed perfect and entire; for the licenser expunged several passages, which reflecting upon the pride and superstition of the Monks in the Saxon times, were understood as a concealed satire upon the Bishops in Charles the second's reign. But the author himself gave a copy of his unlicensed papers to the Earl of Anglesea, who, as well as several of the nobility and gentry, constantly visited him: and in 1681 a considerable passage, which had been suppressed at the beginning of the third book, was published, containing a character of the Long Parliament and Assembly of Divines in 1641, which was inserted in its proper place in the last edition of 1738. Bishop Kennet begins his Complete History of England with this work of Milton, as being the best draught, the clearest and most authentic account of those early times: and his style is freer and easier than in most of his other works, more plain and simple, less figurative and metaphorical, and better suited to the nature of history, has enough of the Latin turn and idiom to give it an air of antiquity, and sometimes rises to a surprising dignity and majesty.

In 1670 likewise his Paradise Regained and Samson Agonistes were licensed together, but were not published till the year following. It is somewhat remarkable, that these two poems were not printed by Simmons, the same who printed the Paradise Lost, but by J. M. for one Starkey, in Fleet street: and what could induce Milton to have recourse to another printer? was it because the former was not enough encouraged by the sale of Paradise Lost to become a purchaser of the other copies? The first thought of Paradise Regained was owing to Elwood the Quaker, as he himself relates the occasion in the history of his life. When Milton had lent him the manuscript of Paradise Lost at St. Giles Chalfont, as we said before, and he returned it, Milton asked him how he liked it, and what he thought of it: "Which I modestly, but freely told him, says Elwood; and after some further discourse about it, I pleasantly said to him, Thou hast said much of Paradise Lost, but what hast thou to say of Paradise Found? He made me no answer, but sat some time in a muse; then broke off that discourse, and fell upon another subject." When Elwood afterwards waited upon him in London, Milton showed him his Paradise Regained, and in a pleasant tone said to him, "This is owing to you, for you put it in my head by the question you put me at Chalfont, which before I had not thought of."

It is commonly reported, that Milton himself preferred this poem to the Paradise Lost; but all that we can assert upon good authority is, that he could not endure to hear this poem cried down so much as it was, in comparison with the other. For certainly it is very worthy of the author, and contrary to what Mr. Toland relates, Milton may be seen in Paradise Regained as well as in Paradise Lost; if it is inferior in poetry, I know not whether it is not superior in sentiment; if it is less descriptive, it is more argumentative; if it does not sometimes rise so high, neither does it ever sink so low; and it has not met with the approbation it deserves, only because it has not been more read and considered. His subject indeed is confined, and he has a narrow foundation to build

upon; but he has raised as noble a superstructure as such little room and such scanty materials would allow. The great beauty of it is the contrast between the two characters of the Tempter and our Saviour, the artful sophistry and specious insinuations of the one refuted by the strong sense and manly eloquence of the other. This poem has also been translated into French, together with some other pieces of Milton, Lycidas, L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, and the Ode on Christ's Nativity: and in 1732, was printed a Critical Dissertation, with Notes upon Paradise Regained, pointing out the beauties of it, and written by Mr. Meadawcourt, Canon of Worcester: and the very learned and ingenious Mr. Jortin has added some observations upon this work at the end of his excellent Remarks upon Spenser, published in 1734; and indeed this poem of Milton, to be more admired, needs only to be better known. His Samson Agonistes is the only tragedy that he has finished, though he has sketched out the plans of several, and proposed the subjects of more, in his manuscript preserved in Trinity College library: and we may suppose that he was determined to the choice of this particular subject by the similitude of his own circumstances to those of Samson blind and among the Philistines. This I conceive to be the last of his poetical pieces; and it is written in the very spirit of the ancients, and equals, if not exceeds, any of the most perfect tragedies, which were ever exhibited on the Athenian stage, when Greece was in its glory. As this work was never intended for the stage, the division into acts and scenes is omitted. Bishop Atterbury had an intention of getting Mr. Pope to divide it into acts and scenes, and of having it acted by the king's scholars at Westminster: but his commitment to the tower put an end to that design. It has since been brought upon the stage in the form of an oratorio; and Mr. Handel's music is never employed to greater advantage, than when it is adapted to Milton's words. The great artist has done equal justice to our author's L'Allegro and Il Penseroso, as if the same spirit possessed both masters, and as if the god of music and of verse was still one and the same.

There are also some other pieces of Milton, for he continued publishing to the last. In 1672, he published Artis Logicæ plenior Institutio ad Petri Rami methodum concinnata, an Institution of Logic after the method of Petrus Ramus; and the year following, a Treatise of True Religion and the best means to Prevent the Growth of Popery, which had greatly increased through the connivance of the King, and the more open encouragement of the Duke of York; and the same year his poems, which had been printed in 1645, were reprinted with the addition of several others. His Familiar Epistles and some Academical Exercises, Epistolarum Familiarium, Lib. I., et Prolusiones quædam Oratoriæ in Collegio Christi habitæ, were printed in 1674; as was also his translation out of Latin into English of the Poles Declaration concerning the election of their King John III., setting forth the virtues and merits of that prince He wrote also a brief History of Muscovy, collected from the relations of several travellers; but it was not printed till after his death in 1682. He had likewise his state-letters transcribed at the request of the Danish resident, but neither were they printed till after his death in 1676, and were translated into English in 1694; and to that translation a life of Milton was prefixed by his nephew Mr. Edward Philips, and at the end of that life his excellent sonnets to Fairfax, Cromwell, Sir Henry Vane, and Cyriac Skinner, on his blindness, were first printed. Besides these works which were published, he wrote his System of Divinity, which Mr. Toland says was in the hands of his friend Cyriac Skinner, but where at present is uncertain. And Mr. Philips says, that he had prepared for the press an answer to some little scribbling quack in London, who had written a scurrilous libel against him; but whether by the dissuasion of friends, as thinking him a fellow not worth his notice, or for what other cause, Mr. Philips knew not, this answer was never published. And indeed the best vindicator of him and his writings has been time; posterity has universally paid that honour to his merits, which was denied him by great part of his contemporaries.

After a life thus spent in study and labours for the public, he died of the gout at his house in Bunhill Row, on or about the 10th of November, 1674, when he had within a month completed the sixty-sixth year of his age. It is not known when he was first attacked by the gout, but he was grievously afflicted with it several of the last years of his life, and was weakened to such a degree, that he died without a groan, and those in the room perceived not when he expired. His body was decently interred near that of his father, (who had died very aged about the year 1647,) in the chancel of the church of St. Giles's, Cripplegate; and all his great and learned friends in London, not without a friendly concourse of the common people, paid their last respects in attending it to the grave. Mr. Fenton, in his short but elegant account of the Life of Milton, speaking of our author's having no monument, says that "he desired a friend to inquire at St. Giles's church; where the sexton showed him a small monument, which he said was supposed to be Milton's; but the inscription had never been legible since he was employed in that office, which he has possessed about forty years. This sure could never have happened in so short a space of time, unless the epitaph had been industriously erased: and

that supposition, says Mr. Fenton, carries with it so much inhumanity, that I think we ought to believe it was not erected to his memory." It is evident that it was not erected to his memory, and that the sexton was mistaken. For Mr. Toland, in his account of the Life of Milton, says, that he was buried in the chancel of St. Giles's church, "where the piety of his admirers will shortly erect a monument becoming his worth and the encouragement of letters in King William's reign." This plainly implies that no monument was erected to him at that time, and this was written in 1698: and Mr. Fenton's account was first published, I think, in 1725; so that not above twenty-seven years intervened from the one account to the other; and consequently the sexton, who it is said had been possessed of his office about forty years, must have been mistaken, and the monument must have been designed for some other person, and not for Milton. A monument indeed has been erected to his memory in Westminster Abbey by Auditor Benson, in the year 1737; but the best monument of him is his writings.

In his youth he was esteemed extremely handsome, so that while he was a student at Cambridge, he was called the Lady of Christ's College. He had a very fine skin and fresh complexion; his hair was of a light brown, and parted on the foretop hung down in curls waving upon his shoulders; his features were exact and regular; his voice agreeable and musical; his habit clean and neat; his deportment erect and manly. He was middle-sized and well proportioned, neither tall nor short, neither too lean nor too corpulent, strong and active in his younger years, and though afflicted with frequent headachs, blindness, and gout, was yet a comely and well-looking man to the last. His eyes were of a light blue colour, and from the first are said to have been none of the brightest; but after he lost the sight of them (which happened about the 43d year of his age) they still appeared without spot or blemish, and at first view and a little distance it was not easy to know that he was blind. Mr. Richardson had an account of him from an ancient clergyman in Dorsetshire, Dr. Wright, who found him in a small house, which had (he thinks) but one room on a floor; in that, up one pair of stairs, which was hung with a rusty green, he saw John Milton sitting in an elbow chair, with black clothes, and neat enough, pale but not cadaverous, his hands and fingers gouty, and with chalk stones; among other discourse he expressed himself to this purpose, that was he free from the pain of the gout, his blindness would be tolerable. But there is the less need to be particular in the description of his person, as the idea of his face and countenance is pretty well known from the numerous prints, pictures, busts, medals, and other representations which have been made of him. There are two pictures of greater value than the rest, as they are undoubted originals, and were in the possession of Milton's widow: the first was drawn when he was about twenty-one, and is at present in the collection of the Right Honourable Arthur Onslow, Esq, Speaker of the House of Commons; the other in crayons was drawn when he was about sixty-two, and was in the collection of Mr. Richardson, but has since been purchased by Mr. Tonson. Several prints have been made from both these pictures; and there is a print, done when he was about sixty-two or sixty-three, after the life by Faithorn, which though not so handsome, may yet perhaps be as true a resemblance as any of them. It is prefixed to some of our author's pieces, and to the folio edition of his prose works in three volumes, printed in 1698.

In his way of living he was an example of sobriety and temperance. He was very sparing in the use of wine or strong liquors of any kind. Let meaner poets make use of such expedients to raise their fancy and kindle their imagination; he wanted not any artificial spirits; he had a natural fire, and poetic warmth enough of his own. He was likewise very abstemious in his diet, not fastidiously nice or delicate in the choice of his dishes, but content with any thing that was most in season, or easiest to be procured, eating and drinking (according to the distinction of the philosopher) that he might live, and not living that he might eat and drink. So that probably his gout descended by inheritance from one or other of his parents; or if it was of his own acquiring, it must have been owing to his studious and sedentary life. And yet he delighted sometimes in walking and using exercise, but we hear nothing of his riding or hunting; and having early learned to fence, he was such a master of his sword, that he was not afraid of resenting an affront from any man; and before he lost his sight, his principal recreation was the exercise of his arms; but after he was confined by age and blindness, he had a machine to swing in for the preservation of his health. In his youth he was accustomed to sit up late at his studies, and seldom went to bed before midnight; but afterwards, finding it to be the ruin of his eyes, and looking on this custom as very pernicious to health at any time, he used to go to rest early, seldom later than nine, and would be stirring in the summer at four, and in the winter at five in the morning; but if he was not disposed to rise at his usual hours, he still did not lie sleeping, but had some body or other by his bed side to read to him. At his first rising he had usually a chapter read to him out of the Hebrew Bible, and he commonly studied all the morning till twelve, then used some exercise for an hour, afterwards dined, and after dinner played on the organ, and either sung himself or

made his wife sing, who (he said) had a good voice but no ear; and then he went up to study again till six, when his friends came to visit him and sat with him perhaps till eight; then he went down to supper, which was usually olives or some light thing; and after supper he smoked his pipe, and drank a glass of water, and went to bed. He loved the country, and commends it, as poets usually do; but after his return from his travels, he was very little there, except during the time of the plague in London. The civil war might at first detain him in town; and the pleasures of the country were in a great measure lost to him, as they depend mostly upon sight, whereas a blind man wants company and conversation, which is to be had better in populous cities. But he was led out sometimes for the benefit of the fresh air, and in warm sunny weather he used to sit at the door of his house near Bunhill Fields, and there as well as in the house received the visits of persons of quality and distinction; for he was no less visited to the last both by his own countrymen and foreigners, than he had been in his flourishing condition before the Restoration.

Some objections, indeed, have been made to his temper; and I remember there was a tradition in the university of Cambridge, that he and Mr. King (whose death he laments in his Lycidas) were competitors for a fellowship, and when they were both equal in point of learning, Mr. King was preferred by the college for his character of good nature, which was wanting in the other; and this was by Milton grievously resented. But the difference of their ages, Milton being at least four years older, renders this story not very probable; and besides, Mr. King was not elected by the college, but was made fellow by a royal mandate, so that there can be no truth in the tradition; but if there was any, it is no sign of Milton's resentment, but a proof of his generosity, that he could live in such friendship with a successful rival, and afterwards so passionately lament his decease. His method of writing controversy is urged as another argument of his want of temper: but some allowance must be made for the customs and manners of the times. Controversy, as well as war, was rougher and more barbarous in those days, than it is in these. And it is to be considered, too, that his adversaries first began the attack; they loaded him with much more personal abuse, only they had not the advantage of so much wit to season it. If he had engaged with more candid and ingenuous disputants, he would have preferred civility and fair argument to wit and satire: "to do so was my choice, and to have done thus was my chance," as he expresses himself in the conclusion of one of his controversial pieces. All who have written any accounts of his life agree, that he was affable and instructive in conversation, of an equal and cheerful temper; and yet I can easily believe, that he had a sufficient sense of his own merits, and contempt enough for his adversaries.

His merits indeed were singular; for he was a man not only of wonderful genius, but of immense learning and erudition; not only an incomparable poet, but a great mathematician, logician, historian, and divine. He was a master not only of the Greek and Latin, but likewise of the Hebrew, Chaldee, and Syriac, as well as of the modern languages, Italian, French, and Spanish. He was particularly skilled in the Italian, which he always preferred to the French language, as all the men of letters did at that time in England; and he not only wrote elegantly in it, but is highly commended for his writings by the most learned of the Italians themselves, and especially by the members of that celebrated academy called della Crusca, which was established at Florence, for the refining and perfecting of the Tuscan language. He had read almost all authors, and improved by all, even by romances, of which he had been fond in his younger years; and as the bee can extract honey out of weeds, so (to use his own words in his Apology for Smectymnuus) "those books, which to many others have been the fuel of wantonness and loose living, proved to him so many incitements to the love and observation of virtue." His favourite author after the Holy Scriptures, was Homer. Homer he could repeat almost all without book; and he was advised to undertake a translation of his works, which no doubt he would have executed to admiration. But (as he says of himself in his postscript to the Judgment of Martin Bucer) "he never could delight in long citations, much less in whole traductions." And accordingly there are few things, and those of no great length, which he has ever translated. He was possessed too much of an original genius to be a mere copyer. "Whether it be natural disposition," says he, "or education in me, or that my mother bore me a speaker of what God made my own, and not a translator." And it is somewhat remarkable, that there is scarce any author, who has written so much, and upon such various subjects, and yet quotes so little from his contemporary authors, or so seldom mentions any of them. He praises Selden, indeed, in more places than one, but for the rest he appears disposed to censure rather than commend. After his severer studies, and after dinner, as we observed before, he used to divert and unbend his mind with playing upon the organ or bass-viol, which was a great relief to him after he had lost his sight; for he was a master of music, as was his father, and he could perform both vocally and instrumentally, and it is said that he composed very well, though nothing of this kind is handed down to us. It is also said, that he had some skill in painting as well as in music, and that somewhere or other there is

a head of Milton drawn by himself: but he was blessed with so many real excellences, that there is no want of fictitious ones to raise and adorn his character. He had a quick apprehension, a sublime imagination, a strong memory, a piercing judgment, a wit always ready, and facetious or grave as the occasion required: and I know not whether the loss of his sight did not add vigour to the faculties of his mind. He at least thought so, and often comforted himself with that reflection.

But his great parts and learning have scarcely gained him more admirers, than his political principles have raised him enemies. And yet the darling passion of his soul was the love of liberty; this was his constant aim and end, however he might be mistaken in the means. He was indeed very zealous in what was called the good old cause, and with his spirit and his resolution, it is somewhat wonderful, that he never ventured his person in the civil war; but though he was not in arms, he was not inactive, and thought, I suppose, that he could be of more service to the cause by his pen than by his sword. He was a thorough republican, and in this he thought like a Greek or Roman, as he was very conversant with their writings. And one day Sir Robert Howard, who was a friend to Milton, as well as to the liberties of his country, and was one of his constant visiters to the last, inquired of him how he came to side with the republicans. Milton answered, among other reasons, because their's was the most frugal government, for the trappings of a monarchy might set up an ordinary commonwealth. But then his attachment to Cromwell must be condemned, as being neither consistent with his republican principles, nor with his love of liberty. And I know no other way of accounting for his conduct, but by presuming (as I think we may reasonably presume) that he was far from entirely approving of Cromwell's proceedings, but considered him as the only person who could rescue the nation from the tyranny of the Presbyterians, who he saw were erecting a worse dominion of their own upon the ruins of prelatical episcopacy; and of all things he dreaded spiritual slavery, and therefore closed with Cromwell and the Independents, as he expected under them greater liberty of conscience. And though he served Cromwell, yet it must be said for him, that he served a great master, and served him ably, and was not wanting from time to time in giving him excellent good advice, especially in his second Defence: and so little being said of him in all Secretary Thurloe's state-papers, it appears that he had no great share in the secrets and intrigues of government: what he despatched was little more than matters of necessary form, letters and answers to foreign states; and he may be justified for acting in such a station, upon the same principle as Sir Matthew Hale, for holding a judge's commission under the usurper: and in the latter part of his life he frequently expressed to his friends his entire satisfaction of mind, that he had constantly employed his strength and faculties in the defence of liberty, and in opposition to slavery.

In matters of religion too he has given as great offence, or even greater, than by his political principles. But still let not the infidel glory: no such man was ever of that party. He had the advantage of a pious education, and ever expressed the profoundest reverence of the Deity in his words and actions, was both a Christian and a Protestant, and studied and admired the Holy Scriptures above all other books whatsoever; and in all his writings he plainly shows a religious turn of mind, as well in verse as in prose, as well in his works of an earlier date as in those of later composition. When he wrote the Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce, he appears to have been a Calvinist; but afterwards he entertained a more favourable opinion of Arminius. Some have inclined to believe, that he was an Arian; but there are more express passages in his works to overthrow this opinion, than any there are to confirm it. For in the conclusion of his Treatise of Reformation he thus solemnly invokes the Trinity; "Thou therefore that sittest in light and glory unapproachable, parent of angels and men! next thee I implore Omnipotent King, Redeemer of that lost remnant whose nature thou didst assume, ineffable and everlasting love! And thou the third subsistence of divine infinitude illumining Spirit, the joy and solace of created things! one tri-personal Godhead! look upon this thy poor, and almost spent and expiring Church, &c." And in his tract of Prelatical Episcopacy he endeavours to prove the spuriousness of some epistles attributed to Ignatius, because they contained in them heresies, one of which heresies is, that "he condemns them for ministers of Satan, who say that Christ is God above all." And a little after in the same tract he objects to the authority of Tertullian, because he went about to "prove an imparity between God the Father, and God the Son." And in the Paradise Lost we shall find nothing upon this head, that is not perfectly agreeable to Scripture. The learned Dr. Trap, who was as likely to cry out upon heresy as any man, asserts that the poem is orthodox in every part of it; or otherwise he would not have been at the pains of translating it. *Neque alienum videtur a studiis viri theologi poema magna ex parte theologicum; omni ex parte (rideant, per me licet, atque ringantur athei et infideles) orthodoxum.* Milton was indeed a dissenter from the Church of England, in which he had been educated, and was by his parents designed for holy orders, as we related before; but he was led away by early prejudices against the doctrine and discipline of the Church

and in his younger years was a favourer of the Presbyterians; in his middle age he was best pleased with the Independents and Anabaptists, as allowing greater liberty of conscience than others, and coming nearest in his opinion to the primitive practice; and in the latter part of his life he was not a professed member of any particular sect of Christians, he frequented no public worship, nor used any religious rite in his family. Whether so many different forms of worship as he had seen, had made him indifferent to all forms; or whether he thought that all Christians had in some things corrupted the purity and simplicity of the Gospel; or whether he disliked their endless and uncharitable disputes, and that love of dominion and inclination to persecution, which he said was a piece of popery inseparable from all churches; or whether he believed, that a man might be a good Christian without joining in any communion; or whether he did not look upon himself as inspired, as wrapt up in God, and above all forms and ceremonies, it is not easy to determine: *to his own master he standeth or falleth:* but if he was of any denomination, he was a sort of a Quietist, and was full of the interior of religion though he so little regarded the exterior; and it is certain was to the last an enthusiast rather than an infidel. As enthusiasm made Norris a poet, so poetry might make Milton an enthusiast.

His circumstances were never very mean, nor very great; for he lived above want, and was not intent upon accumulating wealth; his ambition was more to enrich and adorn his mind. His father supported him in his travels, and for some time after. Then his pupils must have been of some advantage to him, and brought him either a certain stipend, or considerable presents at least; and he had scarcely any other method of improving his fortune, as he was of no profession. When his father died, he inherited an elder son's share of his estate, the principal part of which, I believe, was his house in Bread-street: And not long after, he was appointed Latin Secretary, with a salary of two hundred pounds a year; so that he was now in opulent circumstances for a man who had always led a frugal and temperate life, and was at little unnecessary expense besides buying of books. Though he was of the victorious party, yet he was far from sharing in the spoils of his country. On the contrary, (as we learn from his second Defence) he sustained greater losses during the civil war, and was not at all favoured in the imposition of taxes, but sometimes paid beyond his due proportion. And upon a turn of affairs he was not only deprived of his place, but also lost two thousand pounds, which he had, for security and improvement, put into the Excise Office. He lost, likewise, another considerable sum for want of proper care and management, as persons of Milton's genius are seldom expert in money matters. And in the fire of London his house in Bread-street was burnt, before which accident, foreigners have gone, out of devotion, (says Wood) to see the house and chamber where he was born. His gains were inconsiderable in proportion to his losses; for excepting the thousand pounds, which were given him by the government for writing his Defence of the people against Salmasius, we may conclude that he got very little by the copies of his works, when it does not appear that he received any more than ten pounds for Paradise Lost. Some time before he died he sold the greatest part of his library, as his heirs were not qualified to make a proper use of it, and as he thought that he could dispose of it to greater advantage than they could after his decease. And finally, by one means or other, he died worth one thousand five hundred pounds, besides his household goods, which was no incompetent substance for him, who was as great a philosopher as a poet.

To this account of Milton it may be proper to add something concerning his family. We said before, that he had a younger brother and a sister. His brother, Christopher Milton, was a man of totally opposite principles; was a strong royalist, and after the civil war made his composition through his brother's interest; had been entered young a student in the Inner Temple, of which house he lived to be an ancient bencher; and being a professed papist, was, in the reign of James II, made a judge, and knighted; but soon obtained his quietus by reason of his age and infirmities, and retired to Ipswich, where he lived all the latter part of his life. His sister, Anne Milton, had a considerable fortune given her by her father in marriage with Mr. Edward Philips, (son of Mr. Edward Philips, of Shrewsbury,) who, coming young to London, was bred up in the Crown Office in Chancery, and at length became secondary of the office under Mr. Bembo. By him she had, besides other children who died infants, two sons, Edward and John, whom we have had frequent occasion to mention before. Among our author's juvenile poems there is a copy of verses on the death of a fair infant, a nephew, or rather niece of his, dying of a cough; and this being written in his seventeenth year, as it is said in the title, it may naturally be inferred that Mrs. Philips was elder than either of her brothers. She had likewise two daughters, Mary, who died very young, and Anne, who was living in 1694, by a second husband, Mr. Thomas Agar, who succeeded his intimate friend Mr. Philips in his place in the Crown Office, which he enjoyed many years, and left to Mr. Thomas Milton, son of Sir Christopher before mentioned. As for Milton himself he appears to have been no enemy to the fair sex by having had three wives. What fortune he had with any of them is no where

said, but they were gentlemen's daughters; and it is remarkable that he married them all maidens, for (as he says in his Apology for Smectymnuus, which was written before he married at all) he "thought with them, who both in prudence and elegance of spirit would choose a virgin of mean fortunes, honestly bred, before the wealthiest widow." But yet he seemeth not to have been very happy in any of his marriages; for his first wife had justly offended him by her long absence and separation from him; the second, whose love, sweetness, and goodness he commends, lived not a twelvemonth with him; and his third wife is said to have been a woman of a most violent spirit, and a hard mother-in-law to his children. She died very old, at Nantwich, in Cheshire: and from the accounts of those who had seen her, I have learned, that she confirmed several things which have been related before; and particularly that her husband used to compose poetry chiefly in winter, and on his waking in a morning would make her write down sometimes twenty or thirty verses; and being asked whether he did not often read Homer and Virgil, she understood it as an imputation upon him for stealing from those authors, and answered with eagerness, that he stole from no body but the Muse who inspired him; and being asked by a lady present who the Muse was, replied, it was God's grace, and the Holy Spirit that visited him nightly. She was likewise asked whom he approved most of our English poets, and answered, Spenser, Shakspeare, and Cowley: and being asked what he thought of Dryden, she said Dryden used sometimes to visit him, but he thought him no poet, but a good rhymist: but this was before Dryden had composed his best poems, which made his name so famous afterwards. She was wont, moreover, to say, that her husband was applied to by message from the King, and invited to write for the Court, but his answer was, that such a behaviour would be very inconsistent with his former conduct, for he had never yet employed his pen against his conscience. By his first wife he had four children, a son, who died an infant, and three daughters, who survived him; by his second wife he had only one daughter, who died soon after her mother, who died in childbed; and by his last wife he had no children at all. His daughters were not sent to school, but were instructed by a mistress kept at home for that purpose: and he himself, excusing the eldest on account of an impediment in her speech, taught the two others to read and pronounce Greek and Latin, and several other languages, without understanding any but English, for he used to say that one tongue was enough for a woman: but this employment was very irksome to them, and this, together with the sharpness and severity of their mother-in-law, made them very uneasy at home; and therefore they were all sent abroad to learn things more proper for them, and particularly embroidery in gold and silver As Milton at his death left his affairs very much in the power of his widow, though she acknowledged that he died worth one thousand five hundred pounds, yet she allowed but one hundred pounds to each of his three daughters. Anne, the eldest, was decrepit and deformed, but had a very handsome face; she married a master-builder, and died in childbed of her first child, who died with her. Mary, the second, lived and died single. Deborah, the youngest, in her father's life time went over to Ireland with a lady, and afterwards was married to Mr. Abraham Clarke, a weaver in Spittle Fields, and died in August, 1727, in the seventy sixth year of her age. She is said to have been a woman of good understanding, and genteel behaviour, though in low circumstances. As she had been often called upon to read Homer and Ovid's Metamorphoses to her father, she could have repeated a considerable number of verses from the beginning of both those poets, as Mr. Ward, Professor of Rhetoric in Gresham College, relates upon his own knowledge; and another gentleman has informed me, that he has heard her repeat several verses likewise out of Euripides. Mr. Addison, and the other gentlemen, who had opportunities of seeing her, knew her immediately to be Milton's daughter, by the similitude of her countenance to her father's picture: and Mr. Addison made her a handsome present of a purse of guineas with a promise of procuring for her some annual provision for her life; but his death happening soon after, she lost the benefit of this generous design. She received presents likewise from several other gentlemen, and Queen Caroline sent her fifty pounds by the hands of Dr. Friend, the physician. She had ten children, seven sons and three daughters; but none of them had any children, except one of her sons named Caleb, and one of her daughters named Elizabeth. Caleb went to Fort St. George, in the East Indies, where he married, and had two sons, Abraham and Isaac; the elder of whom came to England with the late governor Harrison, but returned upon advice of his father's death, and whether he or his brother be now living is uncertain. Elizabeth, the youngest child of Mrs. Clarke, was married to Mr. Thomas Foster, a weaver in Spittle Fields, and had seven children who are all dead; and she herself is aged about sixty, and weak and infirm. She seems to be a good, plain, sensible woman, and has confirmed several particulars related above, and informed me of some others, which she had often heard from her mother: and her granfather lost two thousand pounds by a money-scrivener, whom he had intrusted with that sum, and likewise an estate at Westminster of sixty pounds a year, which belonged to the Dean and Chapter, and

was restored to them at the Restoration: that he was very temperate in his eating and drinking, but what he had he always loved to have of the best: that he seldom went abroad in the latter part of his life, but was visited even then by persons of distinction, both foreigners and others: that he kept his daughters at a great distance, and would not allow them to learn to write, which he thought unnecessary for a woman: that her mother was his greatest favourite, and could read in seven or eight languages, though she understood none but English: that her mother inherited his headachs and disorders, and had such a weakness in her eyes, that she was forced to make use of spectacles from the age of eighteen; and she herself, she says, has not been able to read a chapter in the Bible these twenty years: that she was mistaken in informing Mr. Birch, which he had printed upon her authority, that Milton's father was born in France; and a brother of hers who was then living was very angry with her for it, and, like a true born Englishman, resented it highly, that the family should be thought to bear any relation to France: that Milton's second wife did not die in childbed, as Mr. Philips and Toland relate, but above three months after of a consumption; and this too Mr. Birch relates upon her authority; but in this particular she must be mistaken, as well as in the other, for our author's sonnet on his deceased wife plainly implies that she did die in childbed. She knows nothing of her aunt Philips or Agar's descendants, but believes that they are all extinct: as is likewise Sir Christopher Milton's family, the last of which, she says, were two maiden sisters, Mrs. Mary and Mrs. Catharine Milton, who lived and died at Highgate; but unknown to her there is a Mrs. Milton living in Grosvenor-street, the grand-daughter of Sir Christopher, and the daughter of Mr. Thomas Milton before mentioned: and she herself is the only survivor of Milton's own family, unless there be some in the East Indies, which she very much questions, for she used to hear from them sometimes, but has heard nothing now for several years; so that, in all probability, Milton's whole family will be extinct with her, and he can live only in his writings. And such is the caprice of fortune, this grand-daughter of a man, who will be an everlasting glory to the nation, has now for some years with her husband kept a little chandler's or grocer's shop for their subsistence, lately at the lower Holloway, in the road between Highgate and London, and at present in Cock Lane, not far from Shoreditch Church. Another thing let me mention, that is equally to the honour of the present age. Though Milton received not above ten pounds, at two different payments, for the copy of Paradise Lost, yet Mr. Hoyle, author of the treatise on the Game of Whist, after having disposed of all the first impression, sold the copy to the bookseller, as I have been informed, for two hundred guineas.

As we have had occasion to mention more than once Milton's manuscripts preserved in the library of Trinity College in Cambridge, it may not be ungrateful to the reader, if we give a more particular account of them, before we conclude. There are, as we said, two draughts of a letter to a friend who had importuned him to take orders, together with a sonnet on his being arrived to the age of twenty-three; and by there being two draughts of this letter with several alterations and additions, it appears to have been written with great care and deliberation; and both the draughts have been published by Mr. Birch in his Historical and Critical Account of the life and writings of Milton. There are also several of his poems, Arcades, At a solemn music, On time, Upon the circumcision, the Mask, Lycidas, with five or six of his sonnets, all in his own hand writing: and there are some others of his sonnets written by different hands, being most of them composed after he had lost his sight. It is curious to see the first thoughts and subsequent corrections of so great a poet as Milton: but it is remarkable in these manuscript poems that he does not often make his stops, or begin his lines with great letters. There are likewise in his own hand-writing different plans of Paradise Lost in the form of a tragedy: and it is an agreeable amusement to trace the gradual progress and improvement of such a work from its first dawnings in the plan of a tragedy to its full lustre in an epic poem. And together with the plans of Paradise Lost there are the plans or subjects of several other intended tragedies, some taken from the Scripture, others from the British or Scottish histories: and of the latter the last mentioned is Macbeth, as if is he had an inclination to try his strength with Shakspeare; and to reduce the play more to the unities he proposes, "beginning at the arrival of Malcolm at Macduff; the matter of Duncan may be expressed by the appearing of his ghost." These manuscripts of Milton were found by the learned Mr. Professor Mason among some other old papers, which, he says, belonged to Sir Henry Newton Puckering, who was a considerable benefactor to the library: and for the better preservation of such truly valuable relics, they were collected together, and handsomely bound in a thin folio by the care and at the charge of a person, who is now very eminent in his profession, and was always a lover of the Muses, and at that time a fellow of Trinity College, Mr. Clarke, one of his Majesty's council.

Encomiums upon Milton.

IN PARADISUM AMISSAM SUMMI POETÆ JOHANNIS MILTONI.

SAMUELE BARROW, M. D. AUCTORE.

Qui legis Amissam Paradisum, grandia magni
Carmina Miltoni, quid nisi cuncta legis?
Res cunctas, et cunctarum primordia rerum,
Et fata, et fines, continet iste liber.
Intima panduntur magni penetralia mundi,
Scribitur et toto quicquid in orbe latet:
Terræque, tractúsque maris, cœlúmque profundum,
Sulphureumque Erebi, flammivomúmque specus:
Quæque colunt terras, pontúmque, et Tartara cæca,
Quæque colunt summi lucida regna poli:
Et quodcunque ullis conclusum est finibus usquam,
Et sine fine Chaos, et sine fine Deus;
Et sine fine magis, si quid magis est sine fine,
In Christo erga homines conciliatus amor.
Hæc qui speraret quis crederet esse futurum?
Et tamen hæc hodiè terra Britanna legit.
O quantos in bella duces! quæ protulit arma!
Quæ canit, et quantâ prælia dira tubâ!
Cœlestes acies! atque in certamine cœlum!
Et quæ cœlestes pugna deceret agros!
Quantus in æthereis tollit se Lucifer armis!
Atque ipso graditur vix Michaële minor!
Quantis, et quàm funestis concurritur iris,
Dum ferus hic stellas protegit, ille rapit!
Dum vulsos montes ceu tela reciproca torquent,
Et non mortali desuper igne pluunt:
Stat dubius cui se parti concedat Olympus,
Et metuit pugnæ non superesse suæ.
At simul in cœlis Messiæ insignia fulgent,
Et currus animes, armáque digna Deo,
Horrendúmque rotæ strident, et sæva rotarum
Erumpunt torvis fulgura luminibus,
Et flammæ vibrant, et vera tonitrua rauco
Admistis flammis insonuere polo:
Excidit attonitis mens omnis, et impetus omnis,
Et cassis dextris irrita tela cadunt;
Ad pœnas fugiunt; et, ceu foret Orcus asylum,
Infernis certant condere se tenebris.
Cedite, Romani Scriptores; cedite, Graii;
Et quos fama recens vel celebravit anus.
Hæc quicunque leget tantùm cecinisse putabit
Mæonidem ranas, Virgilium culices.

ON PARADISE LOST.

BY ANDREW MARVELL.

When I beheld the Poet blind, yet bold,
In slender book his vast design unfold,
Messiah crowned, God's reconciled decree,
Rebelling angels, the forbidden tree,
Heaven, Hell, Earth, Chaos, all; the argument
Held me awhile misdoubting his intent,
That he would ruin (for I saw him strong)
The sacred truths to fable and old song;
(So Samson groped the temple's post in spight,)
The world o'erwhelming, to revenge his sight.
Yet, as I read, still growing less severe,
I liked his project, the success did fear;
Through that wide field how he his way should find,
O'er which lame Faith leads Understanding blind;
Lest he'd perplex the things he would explain,
And what was easy he should render vain.
Or if a work so infinite he spann'd,
Jealous I was, that some less skilful hand
(Such as disquiet always what is well,
And, by ill imitating would excel)
Might hence presume the whole creation's day
To change in scenes, and show it in a play.
Pardon me, mighty poet, nor despise
My causeless, yet not impious surmise:
But I am now convinced; and none will dare
Within thy labours to pretend a share.
Thou hast not missed one thought that could be fit,
And all that was improper dost omit:
So that no room is here for writers left,
But to detect their ignorance or theft.
That majesty, which through thy work doth reign,
Draws the devout, deterring the profane:
And things divine thou treat'st of in such state
As them preserves, and thee, inviolate.
At once delight and horror on us seize,
Thou sing'st with so much gravity and ease;
And above human flight dost soar aloft
With plume so strong, so equal, and so soft:
The bird, named from that Paradise you sing,
So never flags, but always keeps on wing.
Where could'st thou words of such a compass find?
Whence furnish such a vast expense of mind?
Just Heaven thee, like Tiresias, to requite,
Rewards with prophecy thy loss of sight.
Well might'st thou scorn thy readers to allure
With tinkling rhyme, of thy own sense secure;
While the Town-Bays writes all the while and spells,
And, like a pack-horse, tires without his bells:
Their fancies like our bushy points appear;
The poets tag them, we for fashion wear.
I too, transported by the mode, offend,
And, while I meant to praise thee, must commend:

Thy verse created, like thy theme, sublime,
In number, weight, and measure, needs not rhyme.

EPIGRAM ON MILTON.

BY DRYDEN.

THREE Poets, in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England, did adorn:
The first in loftiness of thought surpassed;
The next, in majesty; in both the last.
The force of Nature could no farther go:
To make a third she joined the former two.

FROM AN ACCOUNT OF

THE GREATEST ENGLISH POETS.

BY ADDISON.

BUT MILTON next, with high and haughty stalks,
Unfetter'd, in majestic numbers, walks:
No vulgar hero can his Muse engage,
Nor earth's wide scene confine his hallow'd rage.
See! see! he upward springs, and, towering high,
Spurns the dull province of mortality;
Shakes Heaven's eternal throne with dire alarms,
And sets th' Almighty Thunderer in arms!
Whate'er his pen describes I more than see,
Whilst every verse array'd in majesty,
Bold and sublime, my whole attention draws,
And seems above the critic's nicer laws.
How are you struck with terror and delight,
When angel with archangel copes in fight!
When great Messiah's outspread banner shines,
How does the chariot rattle in his lines!
What sound of brazen wheels, with thunder, scare
And stun the reader with the din of war!
With fear my spirits and my blood retire,
To see the seraphs sunk in clouds of fire:
But when, with eager steps, from hence I rise,
And view the first gay scene of Paradise;
What tongue, what words of rapture, can express
A vision so profuse of pleasantness!

ADDRESS TO GREAT BRITAIN.

FROM THOMSON'S SUMMER.

——————For lofty sense,
Creative fancy, and inspection keen
Through the deep windings of the human heart,
Is not wild Shakspeare thine and Nature's boast?
Is not each great, each amiable, Muse
Of classic ages in thy MILTON met?
A genius universal as his theme;
Astonishing as chaos; as the bloom
Of blowing Eden fair; as Heaven sublime!

DR. JOHNSON'S PROLOGUE

TO THE

MASK OF COMUS.

Acted at the Drury-Lane Theatre, April 5, 1750
for the benefit of Milton's grand-daughter.

YE patriot crowds, who burn for England's fame,
Ye nymphs, whose bosoms beat at MILTON'S name,
Whose generous zeal, unbought by flattering rhymes,
Shames the mean pensions of Augustan times;
Immortal patrons of succeeding days,
Attend this prelude of perpetual praise!
Let Wit, condemn'd the feeble war to wage
With close malevolence, or public rage;
Let Study, worn with virtue's fruitless lore,
Behold this Theatre, and grieve no more.
This night, distinguished by your smiles, shall tell,
That never Britain can in vain excel;
The slighted arts futurity shall trust,
And rising ages hasten to be just.
At length our mighty Bard's victorious lays
Fill the loud voice of universal praise;
And baffled Spite, with hopeless anguish dumb,
Yields to renown the centuries to come;
With ardent haste each candidate of fame,
Ambitious, catches at his towering name:
He sees, and pitying sees, vain wealth bestow
Those pageant honours which he scorned below,
While crowds aloft the laureat bust behold,
Or trace his form on circulating gold.
Unknown,—unheeded, long his offspring lay,
And want hung threatening o'er her slow decay.
What though she shine with no Miltonian fire,
No favouring Muse her morning-dreams inspire,
Yet softer claims the melting heart engage,
Her youth laborious, and her blameless age;
Hers the mild merits of domestic life,
The patient sufferer, and the faithful wife.
Thus graced with humble Virtue's native charms,
Her grandsire leaves her in Britannia's arms;
Secure with peace, with competence, to dwell,
While tutelary nations guard her cell.
Yours is the charge, ye fair, ye wise, ye brave!
'Tis yours to crown desert—beyond the grave.

FROM

GRAY'S PROGRESS OF POESY.

NOR second HE that rode sublime
Upon the seraph-wings of ecstasy;
The secrets of th' abyss to spy,
He pass'd the flaming bounds of place and time
The living throne, the sapphire blaze,
Where angels tremble while they gaze,
He saw; but, blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.

FROM

COLLINS'S ODE ON THE POETICAL CHARACTER.

High on some cliff, to Heaven up-piled,
Of rude access, of prospect wild,
Where, tangled round the jealous steep,
Strange shades o'erbrow the vallies deep,
And holy Genii guard the rock,
Its glooms embrown, its springs unlock,
While on its rich ambitious head
An Eden, like his own, lies spread;
I view that oak the fancied glades among,
By which as Milton lay, his evening ear,
From many a cloud that dropp'd ethereal dew,
Nigh sphered in Heaven, its native strains could hear,
On which that ancient trump he reached was hung;
Thither oft his glory greeting,
From Waller's myrtle-shades retreating,
With many a vow from Hope's aspiring tongue,
My trembling feet his guiding steps pursue;
In vain:——Such bliss to one alone
Of all the sons of Soul was known;
And Heaven and Fancy, kindred powers,
Have now o'erturn'd th' inspiring bowers,
Or curtain'd close such scene from every future view.

FROM

MASON'S ODE TO MEMORY.

Rise, hallow'd Milton! rise, and say,
How, at thy gloomy close of day;
How, when 'depress'd by age, beset with wrongs;'
When 'fall'n on evil days and evil tongues:'
When Darkness, brooding on thy sight,
Exil'd the sovereign lamp of light:
Say, what could then one cheering hope diffuse?
What friends were thine, save Memory and the Muse?
Hence the rich spoils thy studious youth
Caught from the stores of ancient Truth;
Hence all thy busy eye could pleas'd explore,
When Rapture led thee to the Latian shore;
Each scene that Tiber's bank supplied;
Each grace, that play'd on Arno's side;
The tepid gales, through Tuscan glades that fly;
The blue serene, that spreads Hesperia's sky;
Were still thine own: thy ample mind
Each charm receiv'd, retain'd, combin'd.
And thence the nightly visitant that came
To touch thy bosom with her sacred flame,
Recall'd the long-lost beams of grace;
That whilom shot from Nature's face,
When God in Eden, o'er her youthful breast
Spread with his own right hand Perfection's gorgeous vest.

FROM

DR. ROBERTS' EPISTLE ON THE ENGLISH POETS.

ADDRESSED TO CHRISTOPHER ANSTEY, ESQ.

Poet of other times! to thee I bow
With lowliest reverence. Oft thou tak'st my soul,
And waft'st it by thy potent harmony
To that empyreal mansion, where thine ear
Caught the soft warblings of a seraph's harp,
What time the nightly visitant unlock'd
The gates of Heaven, and to thy mental sight
Display'd celestial scenes. She from thy lyre
With indignation tore the tinkling bells,
And turn'd it to sublimest argument.

FROM

COWPER'S TABLE TALK.

Ages elaps'd ere Homer's lamp appear'd,
And ages ere the Mantuan swan was heard:
To carry Nature lengths unknown before,
And give a Milton birth, ask'd ages more.
Thus Genius rose and set at order'd times,
And shot a day-spring into distant climes,
Ennobling every region that he chose;
He sunk in Greece, in Italy he rose;
And tedious years of gothic darkness pass'd,
Emerg'd all splendour in our isle at last.
Thus lovely halcyons dive into the main,
Then show far off their shining plumes again.

FROM

THE SAME AUTHOR'S TASK, B. III.

——————Philosophy, baptized
In the pure fountain of eternal love,
Has eyes indeed; and, viewing all she sees
As meant to indicate a God to man,
Gives *Him* his praise, and forfeits not her own.
Learning has borne such fruit in other days
On all her branches: Piety has found
Friends in the friends of science, and true prayer
Has flow'd from lips wet with Castalian dews.
Such was thy wisdom, Newton, child-like sage
Sagacious reader of the works of God,
And in his word sagacious. Such too, thine,
Milton, whose genius had angelic wings,
And fed on manna.——————

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

JOHN MILTON.

Paradise Lost.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

This first book proposes, first in brief, the whole subject, man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise wherein he was placed: then touches the prime cause of his fall, the serpent, or rather Satan in the serpent; who, revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of Angels, was, by the command of God, driven out of Heaven, with all his crew, into the great deep. Which action passed over, the poem hastens into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his angels now fallen into Hell, described here, not in the centre, (for heaven and earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed,) but in a place of utter darkness, fittliest called Chaos. Here Satan, with his angels, lying on the burning lake, thunderstruck and astonished, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion, calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him: they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded. They rise; their numbers; array of battle; their chief leaders named, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hope yet of regaining heaven; but tells them lastly of a new world and a new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy or report in heaven; for that angels were long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many ancient fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium, the palace of Satan, rises, suddenly built out of the deep: the infernal peers there sit in council.

Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our wo,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,
In the beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth
Rose out of Chaos: or if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook, that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my advent'rous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for thou knowest; Thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like, sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark
Illumine; what is low raise and support;
That to the height of this great argument
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.

Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of Hell; say first, what cause
Moved our grand parents, in that happy state,
Favoured of Heaven so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?
Th' infernal serpent; he it was, whose guile
Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceived
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host
Of rebel angels; by whose aid aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers,
He trusted to have equall'd the Most High
If he opposed; and, with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God,
Raised impious war in Heav'n, and battle proud,
With vain attempt. Him the almighty power
Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded, though immortal: but his doom
Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness, and lasting pain,
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes
That witnessed huge affliction and dismay,
Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate:

At once, as far as angels ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild;
A dungeon horrible on all sides round,
As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of wo,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed;
Such place eternal Justice had prepared
For those rebellious; here their prison ordained
In utter darkness, and their portion set
As far removed from God and light of heav'n,
As from the centre thrice to th' utmost pole.
O how unlike the place from whence they fell!
There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns; and welt'ring by his side
One next himself in power, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and named
Beelzebub. To whom th' arch enemy,
And thence in Heav'n called Satan, with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence thus began.

"If thou beest he; but O how fall'n! how changed
From him, who, in the happy realms of light,
Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
Myriads though bright! If he whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
Joined with me once, now misery hath joined
In equal ruin! into what pit thou seest,
From what height fall'n; so much the stronger proved
He with his thunder: and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms? yet not for those,
Nor what the potent victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
Though changed in outward lustre, that fixed mind,
And high disdain from sense of injured merit,
That with the mightiest raised me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of spirits armed,
That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,
His utmost power with adverse power opposed
In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,
And shook his throne. What tho' the field be lost?
All is not lost; th' unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield,
And what is else not to be overcome,
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power,
Who from the terror of this arm so late
Doubted his empire; that were low indeed,
That were an ignominy, and shame beneath
This downfall; since, by fate, the strength of gods
And this empyreal substance can not fail;
Since, through experience of this great event,
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
We may with more successful hope resolve
To wage, by force or guile, eternal war,
Irreconcileable to our grand foe,
Who now triumphs, and, in th' excess of joy
Sole reigning, holds the tyranny of Heaven."

So spake th' apostate angel, though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair:
And him thus answered soon his bold compeer.

"O prince, O chief of many throned powers,
That led th' embattled seraphim to war
Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds
Fearless, endangered Heav'n's perpetual King,
And put to proof his high supremacy,
Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate;
Too well I see and rue the dire event,
That with sad overthrow and foul defeat
Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host
In horrible destruction laid thus low,
As far as the gods and heavenly essences
Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
Invincible, and vigour soon returns,
Though all our glory, extinct, and happy state
Here swallowed up in endless misery.
But what if he our Conqueror (whom I now
Of force believe almighty, since no less
Than such could have o'erpowered such force as ours)
Have left us in this our spirit and strength entire
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his business be,
Here in the heart of hell to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy deep;
What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminished, or eternal being,
To undergo eternal punishment?"

Whereto with speedy words th' arch fiend replied.

"Fall'n Cherub! to be weak is miserable
Doing or suffering; but of this be sure,
To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which ofttimes may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destined aim.
But see! the angry victor hath recalled
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the gates of Heaven. the sulphurous hail,

Shot after us in storm, o'erblown, hath laid
The fiery surge, that from the precipice
Of Heaven received us falling; and the thunder,
Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,
Or satiate fury, yield it from our foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tent
From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
There rest, if any rest can harbour there:
And, reassembling our afflicted powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy; our own loss how repair;
How overcome this dire calamity;
What reinforcement we may gain from hope;
If not, what resolution from despair."

Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blazed, his other parts beside
Prone on the flood, extending long and large,
Lay floating many a rood; in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,
Briareos or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held; or that sea beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim th' ocean stream:
Him, haply, slumb'ring on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
Moors by the side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays:
So stretched out huge in length the arch fiend lay,
Chained on the burning lake: nor ever thence
Had risen or heaved his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs;
That with reiterated crime she might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others; and, enraged, might see
How all his malice served but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy, shown
On man by him seduced, but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance poured.
Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames,
Driven backward, slope their pointing spires, and rolled
In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air
That felt unusual weight; till on dry land
He lights, if it were land that ever burned
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire;
And such appeared in hue, as when the force
Of subterranean wind transports a hill
Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered side
Of thundering Ætna, whose combustible
And fuelled entrails thence conceiving fire,
Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds,
And leave a singed bottom all involved
With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him followed his next mate,
Both glorying to have 'scaped the Stygian flood
As gods, and by their own recovered strength,
Not by the sufferance of supernal power.

"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"
Said then the lost archangel, "this the seat
That we must change for Heaven; this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so! since he
Who now is sovereign can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme
Above his equals! Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells. Hail, horrors! hail,
Infernal world! and thou, profoundest hell,
Receive thy new possessor! one who brings
A mind not to be changed by place or time:
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a Heaven of hell, a hell of Heaven.
What matter where if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free: the Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy; will not drive us hence:
Here we may reign secure, and, in my choice
To reign is worth ambition, though in hell:
Better to reign in hell, than serve in Heaven!
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
Th' associates and copartners of our loss,
Lie thus astonished on th' oblivious pool
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion; or once more
With rallied arms to try what may be yet
Regained in Heaven, or what more lost in hell?"

So Satan spake, and him Beelzebub
Thus answered. "Leader of those armies bright,
Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foiled!
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
Of battle when it raged, in all assaults
Their surest signal, they will soon resume
New courage and revive, though now they lie
Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,
As we erewhile, astounded and amazed;
No wonder, fallen such a pernicious height."

He scarce had ceased, when the superior fiend
Was moving toward the shore: his ponderous shield

Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,
Behind him cast; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening from the top of Fesolé,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.
His spear, to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn in Norwegian hills to be the mast
Of some great admiral, were but a wand,
He walked with, to support uneasy steps
Over the burning marle, not like those steps
On Heaven's azure; and the torrid clime
Smote on him sore beside, vaulted with fire:
Nathless he so endured, till on the beach,
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and called
His legions, angel forms, who lay entranced
Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades,
High over-arch'd, embower; or scattered sedge
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed
Hath vexed the Red Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursued
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore their floating carcasses
And broken chariot wheels: so thick bestrown,
Abject and lost lay these, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.
He called so loud, that all the hollow deep
Of hell resounded. "Princes, potentates,
Warriors, the flower of Heaven! once yours, now lost!
If such astonishment as this can seize
Eternal spirits; or have ye chosen this place
After the toil of battle to repose
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find
To slumber here, as in the vales of heaven?
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
T' adore the conqueror? who now beholds
Cherub and seraph rolling in the flood,
With scatter'd arms and ensigns, till anon
His swift pursuers from heaven gates discern
Th' advantage, and descending, tread us down
Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf.
Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen!"
They heard, and were abashed, and up they sprung
Upon the wing; as when men wont to watch
On duty, sleeping found, by whom they dread,
Rouse, and bestir themselves ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
Yet to their general's voice they soon obeyed,
Innumerable. As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
Waved round the coast, up called a pitchy cloud
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darkened all the land of Nile:
So numberless were those bad angels seen,
Hovering on wing under the cope of hell,
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;
Till, as a signal given, th' uplifted spear
Of their great sultan waving to direct
Their course, in even balance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain;
A multitude, like which the populous north
Poured never from her frozen loins, to pass
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barb'rous sons
Came like a deluge on the south, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Lybian sands.
Forthwith from every squadron and each band
The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
Their great commander; godlike shapes, and forms
Excelling human; princely dignities,
And powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones;
Though of their names in heavenly records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and razed
By their rebellion from the books of life.
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
Got them new names, till, wand'ring o'er the earth,
Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,
By falsities and lies the greatest part
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
God their Creator, and th' invisible
Glory of him that made them to transform
Oft to the image of a brute, adorned
With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
And devils to adore for deities:
Then were they known to men by various names,
And various idols through the heathen world.
Say, Muse, their names then known; who first, who last,
Roused from the slumber, on that fiery couch,
At their great emperor's call, as next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof.
The chief were those, who, from the pit of hell
Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
Their seats long after next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altars; gods adored
Among the nations round; and durst abide
Jehovah thund'ring out of Sion, throned
Between the Cherubim, yea, often placed
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
Abominations; and with cursed things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profaned,
And with their darkness durst affront his light.
First, Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears,
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their children's cries unheard, that passed through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
Worshipped in Rabba and her watery plain,

In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon; nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of Sŏlomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God
On that opprobrious hill; and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna called, the type of hell.
Next, Chemos, the obscene dread of Moab's sons,
From Aroer to Nebo, and the wild
Of southmost Abarim: in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines,
And Elëalé to th' Asphaltic pool.
Peor his other name, when he enticed
Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,
To do him wanton rites, which cost them wo.
Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged
E'en to that hill of scandal, by the grove
Of Moloch homicide; lust hard by hate;
Till good Josiah drove them thence to hell.
With these came they, who, from the bord'ring flood
Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Baälim and Ashtaroth, those male,
These feminine: for spirits, when they please,
Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
And uncompounded is their essence pure,
Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh; but, in what shape they choose,
Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,
Can execute their aïry purposes,
And works of love or enmity fulfil.
For those the race of Israel oft forsook
Their living strength, and unfrequented left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial gods; for which their heads as low
Bowed down in battle, sunk before the spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians called
Astarte, queen of Heav'n, with crescent horns:
To whose bright image nightly by the moon
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;
In Sion also not unsung, where stood
Her temple on the offensive mountain, built
By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,
Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell
To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
In amorous ditties all a summer's day,
While smooth Adonis from his native rock
Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,
His eye surveyed the dark idolatries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourned in earnest, when the captive ark
Maimed his brute image, head and hands lopt off
In his own temple, on the grunsel edge,
Where he fell flat, and shamed his worshippers
Dagon his name, sea monster, upward man
And downward fish: yet had his temple high
Reared in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,
And Accaron, and Gaza's frontier bounds.
Him followed Rimmon, whose delightful seat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
He also against the house of God was bold:
A leper once he lost, and gained a king,
Ahaz, his sottish conqu'ror, whom he drew
God's altar to disparage, and displace
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious offerings, and adore the gods
Whom he had vanquished. After these appeared
A crew, who, under names of old renown,
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused
Fanatic Egypt and her priests, to seek
Their wandering gods disguised in brutish forms
Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
Th' infection, when their borrowed gold composed
The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
Likening his Maker to the grazed ox,
Jehovah, who in one night, when he passed
From Egypt marching, equalled with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.
Belial came last, than whom a Spirit more lewd
Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for itself; to him no temple stood,
Or altar smoked: yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who filled
With lust and violence the house of God?
In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury, and outrage: and when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
Exposed a matron to avoid worse rape.
These were the prime in order and in might;
The rest were long to tell, though far renowned,
Th' Ionian Gods, of Javan's issue; held
Gods, yet confessed later than Heaven and Earth,
Their boasted parents: Titan, Heaven's first-born,
With his enormous brood, and birthright seized
By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove,
His own and Rhea's son, like measure found;

So Jove usurping reigned: these first in Crete
And Ida known, thence on the snowy top
Of cold Olympus, ruled the middle air,
Their highest Heaven; or on the Delphian cliff,
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old
Fled over Adra to th' Hesperian fields,
And o'er the Celtic roamed the utmost isles.
All these and more came flocking; but with looks
Downcast and damp; yet such wherein appeared
Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their chief
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost
In loss itself; which on his count'nance cast
Like doubtful hue: but he, his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently raised
Their fainting courage, and dispelled their fears.
Then straight commands that at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud and clarions be upreared
His mighty standard: that proud honour claimed
Azazel as his right, a cherub tall;
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled
Th' imperial ensign, which, full high advanced,
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich emblazed,
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:
At which the universal host upsent
A shout, that tore hell's concave, and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment through the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air,
With orient colours waving: with them rose
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms
Appeared, and serried shields in thick array,
Of depth immeasurable: anon they move
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders; such as raised
To height of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle; and, instead of rage,
Deliberate valour breathed, firm and unmoved
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;
Nor wanting power to mitigate and 'swage
With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase
Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,
Breathing united force, with fixed thought,
Moved on in silence to soft pipes, that charmed
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil: and now
Advanced in view they stand, a horrid front
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriors old with ordered spear and shield,
Awaiting what command their mighty chief
Had to impose: he through the armed files
Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse
The whole battalion views, their order due,
Their visages and stature as of gods;
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and, hard'ning, in his strength
Glories: for never since created man,
Met such embodied force, as, named with these,
Could merit more than that small infantry
Warred on by cranes; though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra with th' heroic race were joined
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mix'd with auxiliar gods; and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son.
Begirt with British and Armoric knights;
And all who since, baptized or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont, or Montalban,
Damasco, or Morocco, or Trebisond,
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,
When Charlemagne with all his peerage fell
By Fontarabia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed
Their dread commander: he, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower: his form had not yet lost
All her original brightness, nor appeared
Less than archangel ruined, and the excess
Of glory obscured: as when the sun, new risen,
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarch. Darkened so, yet shone
Above them all th' archangel: but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care
Sat on his faded cheeks, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather,
(Far other once beheld in bliss,) condemned
For ever now to have their lot in pain,
Millions of spirits for his fault amerced
Of Heaven, and from eternal splendours flung
For his revolt, yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory withered: as when Heaven's fire
Hath scathed the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth, though bare
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
With all his peers: attention held them mute.
Thrice he assayed, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth! at last
Words, interwove with sighs, found out their way
"O myriads of immortal spirits! O powers
Matchless, but with th' Almighty! and that strife
Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change,
Hateful to utter! but what power of mind,
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth

Of knowledge past or present, could have feared
How such united force of gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath emptied heaven, shall fail to reascend,
Self-raised, and repossess their native seat?
For me, be witness all the host of heaven,
If counsels different, or dangers shunned
By me, have lost our hopes. But he, who reigns
Monarch in heaven, till then as one secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Consent or custom, and his regal state
Put forth at full, but still his strength concealed,
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war, provoked! our better part remains
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not! that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife
There went a fame in heaven that he ere long
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation, whom his choice regard
Should favour equal to the sons of Heaven;
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere:
For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial spirits in bondage, nor th' abyss
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
Full counsel must mature: peace is despaired;
For who can think submission? War then, war
Open or understood, must be resolved."

He spake: and, to confirm his words, out flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumined hell: highly they raged
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vaults of heaven.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
Belched fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
Shone with a glossy scurf, undoubted sign
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
The work of sulphur. Thither, winged with speed,
A num'rous brigade hastened: as when bands
Of pioneers, with spade and pick-axe armed
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them;
Mammon, the least erected spirit that fell
From heaven; for e'en in heaven his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, admiring more
The riches of heaven's pavement, trodden gold,
Than ought divine or holy else enjoyed
In vision beatific; by him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
Ransacked the centre, and with impious hands
Rifled the bowels of their mother earth
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Opened into the hill a spacious wound,
And digged out ribs of gold. Let none admire
That riches grow in hell; that soil may best
Deserve the precious bane. And here let those,
Who boast in mortal things, and, wond'ring, tell
Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,
And strength, and art, are easily outdone
By spirits reprobate, and in an hour
What in an age they, with incessant toil
And hands innumerable, scarce perform.
Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepared,
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude
With wondrous art founded the massy ore,
Severing each kind, and scummed the bullion dross:
A third as soon had formed within the ground
A various mould, and from the boiling cells
By strange conveyance filled each hollow nook:
As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
To many a row of pipes the soundboard breathes.
Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,
Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave; nor did they want
Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven;
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
Nor great Alcairo, such magnificence
Equalled in all their glories, to enshrine
Belus or Serapis, their gods, or seat
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile
Stood fixed her stately height; and straight the doors,
Opening their brazen folds, discover wide
Within, her ample spaces, o'er the smooth
And level pavement; from the arched roof,
Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
As from a sky. The hasty multitude
Admiring entered; and the work some praise,
And some the architect: his hand was known
In Heaven by many a towered structure high,
Where sceptered angels held their residence,
And sat as princes, whom the supreme King
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright.
Nor was his name unheard or unadored
In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land
Men called him Mulciber; and how he fell

From Heaven, they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements: from morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
A summer's day; and with the setting sun
Dropt from the zenith like a falling star,
On Lemnos th' Ægean isle: thus they relate,
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
Fell long before, nor aught availed him now
T' have built in heaven high towers; nor did he 'scape
By all his engines, but was headlong sent
With his industious crew to build in hell.
Meanwhile the winged heralds, by command
Of sovereign power, with awful ceremony
And tumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
A solemn council, forthwith to be held
At Pandemonium, the high capital
Of Satan and his peers: their summons called
From every band and squared regiment
By place or choice the worthiest; they anon
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came
Attended: all access was thronged; the gates
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
(Though like a covered field, where champions bold
Wont ride in armed, and at the soldan's chair
Defied the best of Panim chivalry
To mortal combat, or career with lance)
Thick swarmed, both on the ground and in the air,
Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
In spring time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel
New rubbed with balm, expatiate and confer
Their state affairs. So thick the airy crowd
Swarmed and were straitened; till the signal given,
Behold a wonder! They but now who seemed
In bigness to surpass earth's giant sons,
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
Thronged numberless; like that pygmean race
Beyond the Indian mount; or fairy elves,
Whose midnight revels, by a forest side
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while over-head the moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth
Wheels her pale course; they, on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms
Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large,
Though without number still, amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimensions, like themselves,
The great seraphic lords and cherubim
In close recess and secret conclave sat;
A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,
Frequent and full. After short silence then,
And summons read, the great consult began.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

The consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle be to be hazarded for the recovery of heaven; some advise it, others dissuade; a third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan, to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature, equal, or not much inferior to themselves, about this time to be created; their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search; Satan their chief undertakes alone the voyage, is honoured and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways, and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to hell gates, finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them; by whom at length they are opened, and discover to him the great gulf between hell and Heaven; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the power of that place, to the sight of this new world which he sought.

High on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous east with richest hand
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit raised
To that bad eminence: and, from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
Vain war with Heaven; and, by success untaught,
His proud imaginations thus displayed.
"Powers and dominions, deities of Heaven!
For since no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigour, though oppressed and fallen,
I give not Heaven for lost. From this descent
Celestial virtues rising, will appear
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate.
Me, tho' just right, and the fixed laws of Heaven,
Did first create your leader, next, free choice,
With what besides, in counsel or in fight,
Hath been achieved of merit; yet this loss,
Thus far at least recovered, hath much more
Established in a safe unenvied throne,
Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In Heaven, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferior; but who here
Will envy whom the highest place exposes
Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
Of endless pain? Where there is then no good
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
From faction; for none sure will claim in hell
Precedence; none, whose portion is so small
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
Will covet more. With this advantage then

To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in Heaven, we now return
To claim our just inheritance of old,
Surer to prosper than prosperity
Could have assured us; and by what best way,
Whether of open war or covert guile,
We now debate: who can advise, may speak."
He ceased; and next him Moloch, sceptered king,
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest spirit
That fought in Heaven, now fiercer by despair:
His trust was with the Eternal to be deem'd
Equal in strength, and rather than be less
Cared not to be at all: with that care lost
Went all his fear: of God, or hell, or worse,
He recked not, and these words thereafter spake.
"My sentence is for open war: of wiles,
More unexpert, I boast not: them let those
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now,
For, while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
Millions that stand in arms, and, longing, wait
The signal to ascend, sit lingering here
Heaven's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place
Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
The prison of his tyrrany who reigns
By our delay? No! let us rather choose,
Armed with hell-flames and fury, all at once
O'er Heaven's high towers to force resistless way,
Turning our tortures into horrid arms
Against the Torturer; when to meet the noise
Of his almighty engine he shall hear
Infernal thunder, and for lightning see
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
Among his angels, and his throne itself
Mixed with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,
His own invented torments. But perhaps
The way seems difficult and steep to scale
With upright wing against a higher foe.
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench
Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,
That in our proper motion we ascend
Up to our native seat: descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and pursued us through the deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight
We sunk thus low? The ascent is easy then;
The event is feared; should we again provoke
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
To our destruction; if there be in hell
Fear to be worse destroyed: what can be worse
Than to dwell here, driven out from bliss, condemned
In this abhorred deep to utter woe,
Where pain of unextinguishable fire
Must exercise us without hope of end,
The vassals of his anger, when the scourge
Inexorably, and the torturing hour
Calls us to penance? More destroyed than thus,
We should be quite abolished, and expire.
What fear we then? what doubt we to incense
His utmost ire? which to the height enraged,
Will either quite consume us, and reduce
To nothing this essential, happier far
Than, miserable, to have eternal being;
Or, if our substance be indeed divine,
And can not cease to be, we are at worst
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel
Our power sufficient to disturb his Heaven,
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
Though inaccessible, his fatal throne:
Which, if not victory, is yet revenge."
He ended, frowning, and his look denounced
Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous
To less than gods. On the other side up rose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane;
A fairer person lost not Heaven; he seemed
For dignity composed and high exploit:
But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low;
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Timorous and slothful: yet he pleased the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began.
"I should be much for open war, O peers
As not behind in hate; if what was urged
Main reason to persuade immediate war,
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success:
When he, who most excels in fact of arms,
In what he counsels and in what excels
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair,
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
First, what revenge? The towers of Heaven are filled
With armed watch, that render all access
Impregnable: oft on the bordering deep
Encamp their legions; or, with obscure wing,
Scout far and wide into the realm of night,
Scorning surprise. Or, could we break our way,
By force, and at our heels all hell should rise
With blackest insurrection, to confound
Heaven's purest light: yet our great Enemy,
All incorruptible, would on his throne
Sit unpolluted, and the ethereal mould,
Incapable of stain, would soon expel
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
Victorious. Thus repulsed, our final hope
Is flat despair: we must exasperate
The almighty Victor to spend all his rage.
And that must end us; that must be our cure,
To be no more: sad cure! for who would lose.
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity
To perish rather, swallowed up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated night,

Devoid of sense and motion? and who knows,
Let this be good, whether our angry Foe
Can give it, or will ever? how he can,
Is doubtful; that he never will, is sure.
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,
Belike through impotence, or unaware,
To give his enemies their wish, and end
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
To punish endless? Wherefore cease we then?
Say they who counsel war, we are decreed,
Reserved, and destined to eternal wo;
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
What can we suffer worse? Is this then worst,
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
What! when we fled amain, pursued and struck
With Heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought
The deep to shelter us? this hell then seemed
A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay
Chained on the burning lake? that sure was worse.
What if the breath, that kindled those grim fires,
Awaked, should blow them into sevenfold rage,
And plunge us in the flames? or from above
Should intermitted vengeance arm again
His red right hand to plague us? what if all
Her stores were opened, and this firmament
Of hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
Impending horrors, threatening hideous fall
One day upon our heads; while we perhaps,
Designing or exhorting glorious war,
Caught in a fiery tempest, shall be hurled,
Each on his rock transfixed, the sport and prey
Of wracking whirlwinds; or for ever sunk
Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains;
There to converse with everlasting groans,
Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,
Ages of hopeless end? This would be worse.
War, therefore, open or concealed, alike
My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
Views all things at one view? He from Heaven's height
All these our motions vain sees and derides;
Not more almighty to resist our might
Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
Shall we then live thus vile, the race of Heaven
Thus trampled, thus expelled to suffer here
Chains and these torments? better these than worse,
By my advice; since fate inevitable
Subdues us, and omnipotent decree
The victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
Our strength is equal, nor the law unjust
That so ordains: this was at first resolved,
If we were wise, against so great a foe
Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold
And vent'rous, if that fail them, shrink and fear
What yet they know must follow, to endure
Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
The sentence of their Conqueror: this is now
Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,
Our supreme foe in time may much remit
His anger, and perhaps, thus far removed,
Not mind us, not offending, satisfied
With what is punished; whence these raging fires
Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
Our purer essence then will overcome
Their noxious vapour, or, inured, not feel;
Or, changed at length, and to the place conformed
In temper and in nature, will receive
Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;
This horror will grow mild, this darkness light;
Besides what hope the never-ending flight
Of future days may bring, what chance, what change
Worth waiting, since our present lot appears
For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,
If we procure not to ourselves more wo."
Thus Belial, with words clothed in reason's garb,
Counselled ignoble ease, and peaceful sloth,
Not peace: and after him thus Mammon spake.
"Either to disenthrone the King of Heaven
We war, if war be best, or to regain
Our own right lost: him to unthrone we then
May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife:
The former, vain to hope, argues as vain
The latter: for what place can be for us
Within heaven's bound, unless heaven's Lord supreme
We overpower? Suppose he should relent,
And publish grace to all, on promise made
Of new subjection: with what eyes could we
Stand in his presence humble, and receive
Strict laws imposed, to celebrate his throne
With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
Forced hallelujahs, while he lordly sits
Our envied Sovereign, and his altar breathes
Ambrosial odours and ambrosial flowers,
Our servile offerings? This must be our task
In Heaven, this our delight; how wearisome
Eternity so spent, in worship paid
To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue,
By force impossible, by leave obtained
Unacceptable, though in Heaven, our state
Of splendid vassalage, but rather seek
Our own good from ourselves, and from our own
Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
Free, and to none accountable, preferring
Hard liberty before the easy yoke
Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse,
We can create, and in what place soe'er
Thrive under evil and work ease out of pain

Through labour and endurance. This deep world
Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst
Thick clouds and dark doth Heaven's all-ruling Sire
Choose to reside, his glory unobscured,
And with the majesty of darkness round
Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar
Mustering their rage, and Heaven resembles hell?
As he our darkness, can not we his light
Imitate when we please? This desert soil
Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;
Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
Magnificence; and what can Heaven show more?
Our torments also may in length of time
Become our elements; these piercing fires
As soft as now severe, our temper changed
Into their temper; which must needs remove
The sensible of pain. All things invite
To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
Of order, how in safety best we may
Compose our present evils, with regard
Of what we are and were, dismissing quite
All thoughts of war: ye have what I advise."
He scarce had finished, when such murmur filled
Th' assembly, as when hollow rocks retain
The sound of blustering winds, which all night long
Had roused the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
Seafaring men o'erwatched, whose bark by chance,
Or pinnace, anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest: such applause was heard
As Mammon ended; and his sentence pleased,
Advising peace: for such another field
They dreaded worse than hell: so much the fear
Of thunder and the sword of Michael
Wrought still within them; and no less desire
To found this nether empire, which might rise
By policy, and long process of time,
In emulation opposite to Heaven.
Which when Beelzebub perceived, than whom
Satan except, none higher sat, with grave
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seemed
A pillar of state; deep on his front engraven
Deliberation sat, and public care;
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
Majestic though in ruin: sage he stood,
With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
Drew audience and attention still as night
Or summer's noontide air, while thus he spake.
"Thrones and imperial powers, offspring of Heaven,
Ethereal virtues! or these titles now
Must we renounce, and, changing style, be called
Princes of hell! for so the popular vote
Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
A growing empire; doubtless; while we dream,
And know not that the King of Heaven hath doomed
This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat
Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
From Heaven's high jurisdiction, in new league
Banded against his throne, but to remain
In strictest bondage, though thus far removed,
Under the inevitable curb, reserved
His captive multitude: for he, be sure,
In height or depth, still first and last will reign
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part
By our revolt; but over hell extend
His empire, and with iron sceptre rule
Us here, as with his golden those in Heaven.
What sit we then projecting peace and war!
War hath determined us, and foiled with loss
Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
Vouchsafed or sought; for what peace will be given
To us enslaved, but custody severe,
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
Inflicted? and what peace can we return,
But to our power hostility and hate,
Untamed reluctance, and revenge, though slow,
Yet ever plotting how the conqueror least
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
In doing what we most in suffering feel?
Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
With dangerous expedition to invade
Heaven, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,
Or ambush from the deep. What if we find
Some easier enterprise? There is a place,
(If ancient and prophetic fame in Heaven
Err not,) another world, the happy seat
Of some new race called Man, about this time
To be created like to us, though less
In power and excellence, but favoured more
Of him who rules above; so was his will
Pronounced among the Gods, and by an oath,
That shook Heavens whole circumference, confirm'd.
Thither let us bend all our thoughts to learn
What creatures there inhabit, of what mould,
Or substance, how endued, and what their power,
And where their weakness, how attempted best,
By force or subtlety. Though Heaven be shut,
And Heaven's high Arbitrator sit secure
In his own strength, this place may lie exposed,
The utmost border of his kingdom, left
To their defence who hold it: here perhaps
Some advantageous act may be achieved
By sudden onset, either with hell fire
To waste his whole creation, or possess
All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,
The puny habitants, or, if not drive,
Seduce them to our party, that their God
May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
Abolish his own works. This would surpass
Common revenge, and interrupt his joy

In our confusion, and our joy upraise
In his disturbance; when his darling sons,
Hurled headlong to partake with us, shall curse
Their frail original, and faded bliss,
Faded so soon. Advise if this be worth
Attempting, or to sit in darkness here
Hatching vain empires." Thus Beelzebub
Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devised
By Satan, and in part proposed: for whence,
But from the author of all ill could spring
So deep a malice, to confound the race
Of mankind in one root, and earth with hell
To mingle and involve, done all to spite
The great Creator? But their spite still serves
His glory to augment. The bold design
Pleased highly those infernal states, and joy
Sparkled in all their eyes; with full assent
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews:
"Well have ye judged, well ended long debate,
Synod of gods! and like to what ye are,
Great things resolved, which from the lowest deep,
Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view
Of those bright confines, whence, with neighbouring arms
And opportune excursion, we may chance
Re-enter Heaven, or else in some mild zone
Dwell, not unvisited of Heaven's fair light,
Secure, and at the bright'ning orient beam
Purge off this gloom: the soft delicious air,
To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
Shall breathe her balm. But, first, whom shall we send
In search of this new world? whom shall we find
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandering feet
The dark unbottomed infinite abyss,
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncouth way, or spread his airy flight,
Upborne with indefatigable wings,
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
The happy isle? what strength, what art can then
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
Through the strict sentries and stations thick
Of angels watching round? Here he had need
All circumspection, and we now no less
Choice in our suffrage; for, on whom we send,
The weight of all, and our last hope relies."
This said, he sat; and expectation held
His look suspense, awaiting who appeared
To second, or oppose, or undertake
The perilous attempt: but all sat mute,
Pondering the danger with deep thoughts: and each
In other's countenance read his own dismay,
Astonished: none among the choice and prime
Of those Heaven-warring champions could be found
So hardy as to proffer or accept
Alone the dreadful voyage; till at last
Satan, whom now transcendant glory raised
Above his fellows, with monarchal pride,
Conscious of highest worth, unmoved, thus spake.
"O progeny of Heaven, empyreal thrones!
With reason hath deep silence and demur
Seized us, though undismayed: long is the way,
And hard, that out of hell leads up to light;
Our prison strong; this huge convex of fire,
Outrageous to devour, immures us round
Ninefold; and gates of burning adamant,
Barred over us, prohibit all egress.
These passed, if any pass, the void profound
Of unessential Night receives him next,
Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being
Threatens him, plunged in that abortive gulf.
If thence he 'scape into whatever world,
Or unknown region, what remains him less
Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape;
But I should ill become this throne, O peers!
And this imperial sovereignty, adorned
With splendour, arm'd with power, if aught proposed
And judged of public moment, in the shape
Of difficulty or danger could deter
Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume
These royalties and not refuse to reign,
Refusing to accept as great a share
Of hazard as of honour, due alike
To him who reigns, and so much to him due
Of hazard more, as he above the rest
High honoured sits? Go, therefore, mighty powers,
Terror of Heaven, though fallen! intend at home,
While here shall be our home, what best may ease
The present misery, and render hell
More tolerable; if there be cure or charm
To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
Of this ill mansion: intermit no watch
Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad,
Through all the coasts of dark destruction, seek
Deliverance for us all: this enterprise
None shall partake with me." Thus saying, rose
The monarch, and prevented all reply;
Prudent, lest, from this resolution raised,
Others among the chief might offer now
(Certain to be refused) what erst they feared;
And, so refused, might in opinion stand
His rivals, winning cheap the high repute
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
Dreaded not more th' adventure than his voice
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose:
Their rising all at once was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend,
With awful reverence prone: and as a God
Extol him equal to the highest in heaven:
Nor failed they to express how much they praised,
That for the general safety he despised
His own: for neither do the spirits damned
Lose all their virtue: lest bad men should boast

Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,
Or close ambition, varnished o'er with zeal.
Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
Ended, rejoicing in their matchless chief:
As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds
Ascending, while the northwind sleeps, o'erspread
Heaven's cheerful face, the lowering element
Scowls o'er the darkened landscape snow, or shower;
If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.
O shame to men! devil with devil damned
Firm concord holds; men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heavenly grace: and, God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife
Among themselves, and level cruel wars,
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:
As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
That day and night for his destruction wait.
The Stygian council thus dissolved; and forth
In order came the grand infernal peers:
Midst came their mighty Paramount, and seemed
Alone the antagonist of heaven, nor less
Than hell's dread emperor, with pomp supreme,
And godlike imitated state: him round,
A globe of fiery seraphim enclosed
With bright emblazonry, and horrent arms.
Then of their session ended they bid cry
With trumpets regal sound the great result:
Towards the four winds four speedy cherubim
Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy,
By herald's voice explained; the hollow abyss
Heard far and wide, and all the host of hell
With deafening shout returned them loud acclaim.
Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat raised
By false presumptuous hope, the ranged powers
Disband, and, wandering each his several way
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
Leads him perplexed, where he may likeliest find
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
The irksome hours, till his great chief return.
Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,
Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,
As at the Olympian games or Pythian fields:
Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form,
As when, to warn proud cities, war appears
Waged in the troubled sky, and armies rush
To battle in the clouds, before each van
Prick forth the airy knights, and couch their spears
Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms
From either end of heaven the welkin burns.
Others, with vast Typhœan rage more fell,
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air
In whirlwind, hell scarce holds the wild uproar.
As when Alcides, from Œchalia crowned
With conquest, felt th' envenomed robe, and tore
Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,
And Lichas from the top of Œta threw
Into th' Euobic sea. Others, more mild,
Retreated in a silent valley, sing
With notes angelical to many a harp
Their own heroic deed and hapless fall
By doom of battle; and complain that fate
Free virtue should inthral to force or chance.
Their song was partial, but the harmony
(What could it less when spirits immortal sing!)
Suspended hell, and took with ravishment
The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet
(For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense)
Others apart sat on a hill retired,
In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate;
Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute;
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.
Of good and evil much they argued then,
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and apathy, and glory and shame;
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy!
Yet with a pleasing sorcery could charm
Pain for a while or anguish, and excite
Fallacious hope, or arm the obdured breast
With stubborn patience as with triple steel.
Another part in squadrons and gross bands,
On bold adventure to discover wide
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
Might yield them easier habitation, bend
Four ways their flying march, along the banks
Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge
Into the burning lake their baleful streams:
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
Sad Acheron, of sorrow, black and deep;
Cocytus, named of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon,
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
Far off from these, a slow and silent stream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks,
Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
Beyond this flood a frozen continent
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind, and dire hail, which on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems
Of ancient pile; all else deep snow and ice,
A gulf profound, as that Serbonian bog
Betwixt Damiata and mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
Burns frore, and cold performs the effect of fire.
Thither, by harpy-footed furies haled,
At certain revolutions, all the damned
Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change

Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,
From beds of raging fire, to starve in ice
Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
Immoveable, infixed, and frozen round,
Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire.
They ferry over this Lethean sound
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
In sweet forgetfulness all pain and wo,
All in one moment, and so near the brink;
But Fate withstands, and to oppose the attempt
Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards
The ford, and of itself the water flies
All taste of living wight, as once it fled
The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
In confused march forlorn, the advent'rous bands,
With shuddering horror pale, and eyes aghast,
Viewed first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest: through many a dark and dreary vale
They passed, and many a region dolorous,
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp,
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,
A universe of death, which God by curse
Created evil, for evil only good,
Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feigned, or fear conceived,
Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimeras dire.
Meanwhile the adversary of God and man,
Satan, with thoughts inflamed of highest design,
Puts on swift wings, and towards the gates of hell
Explores his solitary flight: sometimes
He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left.
Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars
Up to the fiery concave towering high.
As when far off at sea a fleet descried
Hangs in the clouds by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs; they, on the trading flood,
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape,
Ply stemming nightly towards the pole: so seemed
Far off the flying fiend. At last appear
Hell bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof,
And thrice threefold the gates: three folds were brass,
Three iron, three of adamantine rock
Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire,
Yet unconsumed. Before the gates there sat
On either side a formidable shape;
The one seemed woman to the waist, and fair,
But ended foul in many a scaly fold
Voluminous and vast, a serpent armed
With mortal sting; about her middle round
A cry of hell-hounds, never ceasing, barked
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,
If aught disturbed their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there; yet there still barked and howled,
Within unseen. Far less abhorred than these
Vexed Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:
Nor uglier follow the nighthag, when, called
In secret, riding through the air she comes,
Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, while the lab'ring moon
Eclipses at their charms. The other shape,
If shape it might be called that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;
Or substance might be called that shadow seemed
For each seemed either; black it stood as night,
Fierce as ten furies, terrible as Hell,
And shook a dreadful dart; what seemed his head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
Satan was now at hand; and from his seat
The monster, moving onward, came as fast
With horrid strides; hell trembled as he strode.
The undaunted fiend what this might be admired,
Admired, not feared: God and his Son except,
Created thing naught valued he, nor shunned;
And with disdainful look thus first began.
"Whence and what art thou, execrable shape!
That dares, though grim and terrible, advance
Thy miscreated front athwart my way
To yonder gates? through them I mean to pass,
That be assured, without leave asked of thee:
Retire, or taste thy folly; and learn by proof,
Hell-born! not to contend with spirits of Heaven."
To whom the goblin, full of wrath, replied,
"Art thou that traitor angel, art thou he,
Who first broke peace in heaven, and faith, till then
Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms
Drew after him the third part of Heaven's sons
Conjured against the Highest, for which both thou
And they, outcast from God, are here condemned
To waste eternal days, in wo and pain?
And reckonest thou thyself with spirits of heaven,
Hell-doomed! and breathest defiance here and scorn,
Where I reign king, and, to enrage thee more,
Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment,
False fugitive! and to thy speed add wings,
Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue
Thy lingering, or with one stroke of this dart
Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before."
So spake the grisly terror, and in shape,
So speaking and so threatening, grew tenfold
More dreadful and deformed: on the other side,
Incensed with indignation, Satan stood
Unterrified, and like a comet burned,
That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
In the arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
Levelled his deadly aim; their fatal hands

No second stroke intend; and such a frown
Each cast at the other, as when two black clouds,
With heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caspian, then stand front to front
Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow
To join their dark encounter in mid air:
So frowned the mighty combatants, that hell
Grew darker at their frown; so matched they stood;
For never but once more was either like
To meet so great a foe: and now great deeds
Had been achieved, whereof all hell had rung,
Had not the snaky sorceress that sat
Fast by hell gate, and kept the fatal key,
Risen, and with hideous outcry rushed between.
"O father! what intends thy hand," she cried,
"Against thy only son! What fury, O son!
Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
Against thy father's head! and knowest for whom?
For him who sits above and laughs the while
At thee ordained his drudge, to execute
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids;
His wrath which will one day destroy ye both."
She spake, and at her words the hellish pest
Forebore; then these to her Satan returned.
"So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand,
Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds
What it intends! till first I know of thee,
What thing thou art, thus double-formed, and why,
In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st
Me father, and that phantasm call'st my son;
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
Sight more detestable than him and thee.'
To whom thus the portress of hell-gate replied:
"Hast thou forgotten me then, and do I seem
Now in thine eyes so foul? once deemed so fair
In Heaven, when at the assembly, and in sight
Of all the seraphim with thee combined
In bold conspiracy against Heaven's King,
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surprised thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swam
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth, till on the left side opening wide,
Likest to thee in shape and countenance bright,
Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess armed,
Out of thy head I sprung: amazement seized
All the host of Heaven; back they recoiled, afraid
At first, and called me Sin, and for a sign
Portentous held me; but, familiar grown,
I pleased, and with attractive graces won
The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft,
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing,
Becam'st enamoured, and such joy thou took'st
With me in secret, that my womb conceived
A growing burden. Meanwhile war arose,
And fields were fought in Heaven; wherein remained
(For what could else?) to our Almighty Foe
Clear victory, to our part loss and rout
Through all the empyrean: down they fell,
Driven headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down
Into this deep, and in the general fall
I also; at which time this powerful key
Into my hand was given, with charge to keep
These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
Without my opening. Pensive here I sat
Alone: but long I sat not, till my womb,
Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown
Prodigious motion felt, and rueful throes,
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way,
Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
Transformed; but he my inbred enemy
Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart,
Made to destroy: I fled, and cried out *Death!*
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sighed
From all her caves, and back resounded *Death!*
I fled; but he pursued, (though more it seems,
Inflamed with lust than rage,) and swifter far,
Me overtook, his mother, all dismayed,
And, in embraces forcible and foul
Engendering with me, of that rape begot
These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry
Surrounded me, as thou sawest, hourly conceived
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
To me; for when they list, into the womb
That bred them they return, and howl and gnaw
My bowels, their repast; then, bursting forth
Afresh, with conscious terrors vex me round,
That rest or intermission none I find.
Before mine eyes in opposition sits
Grim Death, my son and foe, who sets them on,
And me his parent would full soon devour
For want of other prey, but that he knows
His end with mine involved; and knows that I
Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
Whenever that shall be; so fate pronounced.
But thou, O father! I forewarn thee, shun
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
Though tempered heavenly; for that mortal dint,
Save he who reigns above, none can resist."
She finished, and the subtle fiend his lore
Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answered smooth.
"Dear daughter! since thou claim'st me for thy sire,
And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge
Of dalliance, had with thee in Heaven, and joys
Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change
Befallen us, unforeseen, unthought of; know,
I come no enemy, but to set free
From out this dark and dismal house of pain
Both him and thee, and all the heavenly host
Of spirits, that, in our just pretences armed

Fell with us from on high: from them I go
This uncouth errand sole, and one for all
Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
Th' unfounded deep, and through the void immense
To search with wandering quest a place foretold
Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
Created vast and round, a place of bliss
In the purlieus of Heaven, and therein placed
A race of upstart creatures, to supply
Perhaps our vacant room, though more removed,
Lest Heaven, surcharged with potent multitude,
Might hap to move new broils: be this or aught
Than this more secret now designed, I haste
To know, and this once known, shall soon return,
And bring ye to the place where thou and Death
Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
Wing silently the buxom air, embalmed
With odours; there ye shall be fed and filled
Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey.'
He ceased, for both seemed highly pleased, and Death
Grinned horribly a ghastly smile, to hear
His famine should be filled, and blest his maw
Destined to that good hour: no less rejoiced
His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire.
"The key of this infernal pit by due,
And by command of Heaven's all powerful King,
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
These adamantine gates; against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearless to be o'ermatched by living might.
But what owe I to his commands above
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
Into the gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful office here confined,
Inhabitant of heaven, and heavenly born,
Here in perpetual agony and pain,
With terrors and with clamours compassed round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
My being gavest me; whom should I obey
But thee, whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon
To that new world of light and bliss, among
The gods who live at ease, where I shall reign
At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end."
Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
Sad instrument of all our wo, she took;
And, towards the gate rolling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge portcullis high up drew,
Which, but herself, not all the Stygian powers
Could once have moved: then in the keyhole turns
Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of massy iron or solid rock with ease
Unfastens: on a sudden open fly
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound,
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder; that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. She opened, but to shut
Excelled her power; the gates wide open stood,
That with extended wings a bannered host,
Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through
With horse and chariots ranked in loose array;
So wide they stood, and like a furnace mouth
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
Before their eyes in sudden view appear
The secrets of the hoary deep, a dark
Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension; where length, breadth, and heighth,
And time, and place are lost; where eldest Night
And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,
Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring
Their embryon atoms; they around the flag
Of each his faction, in their several clans,
Light armed or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift, or slow,
Swarm populous, unnumbered as the sands
Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,
Levied to side with warring winds, and poise
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere
He rules a moment: Chaos umpire sits,
And by decision more embroils the fray,
By which he reigns; next him high arbiter
Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss,
The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave,
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
But all these in their pregnant causes mixed
Confusedly, and which thus must ever fight,
Unless the almighty Maker them ordain
His dark materials to create more worlds;
Into this wild abyss the wary fiend
Stood on the brink of hell, and looked a while,
Pondering his voyage; for no narrow frith
He had to cross. Nor was his ear less pealed
With noises loud and ruinous (to compare
Great things with small) than when Bellona storms,
With all her battering engines bent to raze
Some capital city; or less than if this frame
Of Heaven were falling, and these elements
In mutiny had from her axle torn
The steadfast earth. At last his sail-broad vans
He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke
Uplifted spurns the ground; thence many a league,
As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides
Audacious; but, that seat soon falling, meets
A vast vacuity: all unawares,
Fluttering his pennons vain, plump down he drops
Ten thousand fathom deep; and to this hour
Down had been falling, had not by ill chance

The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
As many miles aloft: that fury stayed,
Quenched in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea
Nor good dry land: nigh foundered, on he fares,
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
Half flying; behooves him now both oar and sail.
As when a gryphon, through the wilderness
With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,
Pursues the Arimaspian, who by stealth
Had from his wakeful custody purloined
The guarded gold: so eagerly the fiend
O'er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet pursues his way,
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies:
At length a universal hubbub wild
Of stunning sounds, and voices all confused,
Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
With loudest vehemence: thither he plies,
Undaunted to meet there whatever power
Or spirit of the nethermost abyss
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies
Bordering on light; when straight behold the throne
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread
Wide on the wasteful deep; with him enthroned
Sat sable vested Night, eldest of things,
The consort of his reign; and by them stood
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
Of Demogorgon; Rumour next, and Chance,
And Tumult, and Confusion, all embroiled,
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.
T' whom Satan, turning boldly, thus, "Ye powers
And spirits of this nethermost abyss,
Chaos and ancient night! I come no spy,
With purpose to explore or to disturb
The secrets of your realm; but, by constraint
Wandering this darksome desert, as my way
Lies through your spacious empire up to light,
Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek
What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
Confine with Heaven; or if some other place,
From your dominion won, th' ethereal King
Possesses lately, thither to arrive
I travel this profound: direct my course;
Directed, no mean recompense it brings
To your behoof, if I that region lost,
All usurpation thence expelled reduce,
To her original darkness, and your sway,
(Which is my present journey,) and once more
Erect the standard there of ancient night:
Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge."
Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,
With faltering speech and visage incomposed
Answered, "I know thee, stranger! who thou art,
That mighty leading angel, who of late
Made head against Heaven's King, though overthrown.
I saw and heard; for such a numerous host
Fled not in silence through the frighted deep,
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
Confusion worse confounded; and Heaven gates
Poured out by millions her victorious bands
Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
Keep residence; if all I can will serve
That little which is left so to defend,
Encroached on still through your intestine broils,
Weakening the sceptre of old Night: first hell,
Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;
Now lately Heaven and Earth, another world,
Hung o'er my realm, linked in a golden chain
To that side Heaven from whence your legions fell:
If that way be your walk, you have not far;
So much the nearer danger; go, and speed!
Havoc, and spoil, and ruin are my gain."
He ceased; and Satan stayed not to reply,
But, glad that now his sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacrity and force renewed,
Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,
Into the wild expanse, and through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round
Environed, wins his way; harder beset,
And more endangered, than when Argo passed
Through Bosphorus, betwixt the justling rocks;
Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunned
Charybdis, and by the other whirlpool steered.
So he with difficulty and labour hard
Moved on, with difficulty and labour he:
But, he once past, soon after, when man fell,
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain
Following his track, such was the will of Heaven,
Paved after him a broad and beaten way
Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
Tamely endured a bridge of wondrous length,
From hell continued, reaching the utmost orb
Of this frail world; by which the spirits perverse
With easy intercourse pass to and fro
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
God and good angels guard by special grace.
But now at last the sacred influence
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heaven
Shoots far into the bosom of dim night
A glimmering dawn: here Nature first begins
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire,
As from her outmost works a broken foe,
With tumult less, and with less hostile din:
That Satan with less toil, and now with ease,
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,
And, like a weatherbeaten vessel, holds
Gladly the port; though shrouds and tackle torn;
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air,
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
Far off the empyreal Heaven, extended wide
In circuit, undetermined square or round,
With opal towers and battlements adorned

Of living sapphire, once his native seat;
And fast by, hanging in a golden chain,
This pendent world, in bigness as a star
Of smallest magnitude close by the moon
Thither, full fraught with mischievous revenge,
Accursed, and in a cursed hour, he hies.

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

God, sitting on his throne, sees Satan flying towards this world, then newly created; shows him to the Son, who sat at his right hand; foretells the success of Satan in perverting mankind; clears his own justice and wisdom from all imputation, having created man free, and able enough to have withstood his tempter; yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduced. The Son of God renders praises to his Father, for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards man; but God again declares, that grace can not be extended towards man without the satisfaction of divine justice; man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to Godhead, and, therefore, with all his progeny, devoted to death, must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransom for man: the Father accepts him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in Heaven and earth; commands all the angels to adore him; they obey, and, hymning to their harps in full choir, celebrate the Father and the Son. Meanwhile Satan alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb; where wandering, he first finds a place since called the Limbo of Vanity: what persons and things fly up thither; thence comes to the gate of Heaven, described ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it; his passage thence to the orb of the sun; he finds there Uriel, the regent of that orb, but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner angel; and pretending a zealous desire to behold the new creation, and man whom God had placed here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed: alights first on mount Niphates.

Hail, holy Light! offspring of Heaven first born!
Or of the eternal coeternal beam
May I express thee unblamed? since God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.
Or hearest thou rather pure ethereal stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the sun,
Before the heavens thou wert, and, at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless infinite.
Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
Escaped the Stygian pool, though long detained
In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight
Through utter and through middle darkness borne,
With other notes than to the Orphean lyre,
I sung of Chaos and eternal Night,
Taught by the heavenly Muse to venture down
The dark descent, and up to reascend,
Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,
And feel thy sovereign vital lamp; but thou
Revisitest not these eyes, that roll in vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
So thick a drop serene hath quenched their orbs,
Or dim suffusion veiled. Yet not the more
Cease I to wander, where the muses haunt
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath,
That wash thy hallowed feet, and warbling flow
Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget
Those other two equalled with me in fate,
So were I equalled with them in renown,
Blind Thamyris and blind Mæonides,
And Tiresias and Phineus, prophets old:
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year
Seasons return; but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and, for the book of knowledge fair
Presented with a universal blank
Of nature's works, to me expunged and razed,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather thou, celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate; there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

Now had the almighty Father from above,
From the pure empyrean where he sits
High throned above all height, bent down his eye,
His own works and their works at once to view:
About him all the sanctities of Heaven
Stood thick as stars, and from his sight received
Beatitude past utterance; on his right
The radiant image of his glory sat,
His only Son; on the earth he first beheld
Our two first parents, yet the only two
Of mankind, in the happy garden placed,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrivalled love,
In blissful solitude; he then surveyed
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there
Coasting the wall of Heaven on this side Night
In the dun air sublime, and ready now
To stoop, with wearied wings, and willing feet,
On the bare outside of this world, that seemed
Firm land embosomed, without firmament,
Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
Him God beholding from his prospect high
Wherein past, present, future he beholds,
Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake.

"Only begotten Son, seest thou what rage

Transports our adversary? whom no bounds
Prescribed, no bars of hell, nor all the chains
Heaped on him there, nor yet the main abyss
Wide interrupt can hold; so bent he seems
On desperate revenge, that shall redound
Upon his own rebellious head. And now,
Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way
Nor far off Heaven, in the precincts of light,
Directly towards the new created world,
And man there placed, with purpose to assay
If him by force he can destroy, or, worse,
By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert:
For man will hearken to his glozing lies,
And easily transgress the sole command,
Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall
He and his faithless progeny: whose fault?
Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
All he could have; I made him just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
Such I created all the ethereal powers
And spirits, both them who stood and them who failed;
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,
Where only what they needs must do appeared,
Not what they would? what praise could they receive?
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
When will and reason (reason also is choice)
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoiled,
Made passive both, had served necessity,
Not me? They, therefore, as to right belonged
So were created, nor can justly accuse
Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
As if predestination overruled
Their will, disposed by absolute decree
Or high foreknowledge; they themselves decreed
Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.
So without least impulse or shadow of fate,
Or aught by me immutably foreseen,
They trespass, authors to themselves in all
Both what they judge and what they choose; for so
I formed them free, and free they must remain,
Till they inthral themselves; I else must change
Their nature, and revoke the high decree
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordained
Their freedom; they themselves ordained their fall.
The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
Self-tempted, self-depraved: man falls, deceived
By the other first: man therefore shall find grace,
The other none: in mercy and justice both,
Through heaven and earth, so shall my glory excel:
But mercy first and last shall brightest shine."

Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance filled
All Heaven, and in the blessed spirit elect
Sense of new joy ineffable diffused:
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious; in him all his Father shone
Substantially expressed; and in his face
Divine compassion visibly appeared,
Love without end, and without measure grace,
Which uttering, thus he to his Father spake:
"O Father, gracious was that word which closed
Thy sovereign sentence, that man should find grace
For which both Heaven and earth shall high extol
Thy praises, with th' innumerable sound
Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
Incompassed shall resound thee ever blest.
For should man finally be lost, should man,
Thy creature late so loved, thy youngest son
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though joined
With his own folly? that be from thee far,
That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
Of all things made, and judgest only right.
Or shall the adversary thus obtain
His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil
His malice, and thy goodness bring to nought,
Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
Yet with revenge accomplished, and to hell
Draw after him the whole race of mankind,
By him corrupted? or wilt thou thyself
Abolish thy creation, and unmake,
For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?
So should thy goodness and thy greatness both
Be questioned and blasphemed without defence."

To whom the great Creator thus replied,
"O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,
Son of my bosom, Son who art alone
My word, my wisdom, and effectual might,
All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
As my eternal purpose hath decreed:
Man shall not quite be lost, but saved who will,
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
Freely vouchsafed; once more I will renew
His lapsed powers, though forfeit and inthralled
By sin to foul exorbitant desires;
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe,
By me upheld, that he may know how frail
His fallen condition is, and to me owe
All his deliverance, and to none but me.
Some I have chosen of peculiar grace,
Elect above the rest; so is my will:
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warned
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
Th' incensed Deity, while offered grace
Invites; for I will clear their senses dark,
What may suffice and soften stony hearts

To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.
To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,
Though but endeavoured with sincere intent,
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
And I will place within them as a guide
My umpire Conscience, whom if they will hear,
Light after light well used they shall attain,
And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
This my long sufferance and my day of grace
They who neglect and scorn shall never taste;
But hard be hardened, blind be blinded more,
That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;
And none but such from mercy I exclude.
But yet all is not done; man disobeying,
Disloyal, breaks his fealty, and sins
Against the high supremacy of Heaven,
Affecting Godhead, and, so losing all,
To expiate his treason hath naught left,
But to destruction sacred and devote,
He with his whole posterity must die,
Die he or justice must: unless for him
Some other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
Say, heavenly powers, where shall we find such love?
Which of ye will be mortal to redeem
Man's mortal crime, and just th' unjust to save?
Dwells in all heaven charity so dear?"
He asked, but all the heavenly choir stood mute,
And silence was in Heaven; on man's behalf
Patron or intercessor none appeared,
Much less that durst upon his own head draw
The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.
And now without redemption all mankind
Must have been lost, adjudged to death and hell
By doom severe, had not the Son of God
In whom the fulness dwells of love divine,
His dearest mediation thus renewed.
"Father, thy word is past, man shall find grace;
And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
The speediest of thy winged messengers,
To visit all thy creatures, and to all
Comes unprevented, unimplored, unsought?
Happy for man, so coming, he her aid
Can never seek, once dead in sins, and lost;
Atonement for himself or offering meet,
Indebted and undone, hath none to bring:
Behold me then; me for him; life for life
I offer: on me let thine anger fall;
Account me man; I for his sake will leave
Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
Freely put off, and for him lastly die
Well pleased; on me let Death wreak all his rage;
Under his gloomy power I shall not long
Lie vanquished; thou hast given me to possess
Life in myself for ever: by thee I live.
Though now to Death I yield, and am his due
All that of me can die; yet that debt paid
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
For ever with corruption there to dwell;
But I shall rise victorious, and subdue
My vanquisher, spoiled of his vaunted spoil;
Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarmed,
I through the ample air in triumph high
Shall lead hell captive, maugre hell, and show
The powers of darkness bound. Thou, at the sight
Pleased, out of Heaven shall look down and smile,
While, by thee raised, I ruin all my foes,
Death last, and with his carcass glut the grave:
Then with the multitude of my redeemed
Shall enter Heaven, long absent, and return,
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assured
And reconcilement: wrath shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire."
His words here ended, but his meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breathed immortal love
To mortal men, above which only shone
Filial obedience: as a sacrifice
Glad to be offered, he attends the will
Of his great Father. Admiration seized
All Heaven, what this might mean, and whither tend,
Wondering; but soon th' Almighty thus replied.
"O thou, in Heaven and earth the only peace
Found out for mankind under wrath! O thou,
My sole complacence! well thou knowest how dear
To me are all my works, nor man the least,
Though last created; that for him I spare
Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,
By losing thee awhile, the whole race lost.
Thou, therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
Their nature also to thy nature join;
And be thyself man among men on earth,
Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed,
By wondrous birth: be thou, in Adam's room,
The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
As in him perish all men, so in thee,
As from a second root, shall be restored
As many as are restored, without thee none.
His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit,
Imputed, shall absolve them who renounce
Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
Receive new life. So man, as is most just,
Shall satisfy for man, be judged and die,
And dying rise, and rising with him raise
His brethren, ransomed with his own dear life.
So heavenly love shall outdo hellish hate.

Giving to death, and dying to redeem,
So dearly to redeem what hellish hate
So easily destroyed, and still destroys
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
Because thou hast, though throned in highest bliss
Equal to God, and equally enjoying
Godlike fruition, quitted all to save
A world from utter loss, and hast been found
By merit more than birthright Son of God,
Found worthiest to be so by being good,
Far more than great or high; because in thee
Love hath abounded more than glory abounds;
Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
With thee thy manhood also to this throne:
Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign
Both God and man, Son both of God and man,
Anointed universal King; all power
I give thee; reign for ever, and assume
Thy merits; under thee, as head supreme,
Thrones, princedoms, powers, dominions I reduce:
All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
In Heaven, or earth, or under earth in hell.
When thou, attended gloriously from Heaven,
Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
The summoning archangels to proclaim
Thy dread tribunal, forthwith from all winds
The living, and forthwith the cited dead
Of all past ages to the general doom
Shall hasten, such a peal shall rouse their sleep.
Then, all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge
Bad men and angels; they, arraigned, shall sink
Beneath thy sentence; hell, her numbers full,
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Meanwhile
The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New Heaven and earth, wherein the just shall dwell,
And, after all their tribulations long,
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.
Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by,
For regal sceptre then no more shall need,
God shall be all in all. But, all ye gods,
Adore him, who to compass all this dies;
Adore the Son, and honour him as me."
No sooner had the Almighty ceased, but all
The multitude of angels, with a shout
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heaven rung
With jubilee, and loud hosannas filled
The eternal regions: lowly reverent
Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground
With solemn adoration down they cast
Their crowns inwove with amaranth and gold;
Immortal amaranth, a flower which once
In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,
Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence
To Heaven removed, where first it grew, there grows,
And flowers, aloft, shading the fount of life,
And where the river of bliss through midst of Heaven
Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream:
With these that never fade the spirits elect
Bind their resplendent locks inwreathed with beams;
Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
Impurpled with celestial roses smiled.
Then, crowned again, their golden harps they took,
Harps ever tuned, that, glittering by their side,
Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet
Of charming symphony they introduce
Their sacred song, and waken raptures high;
No voice exempt, no voice but well could join
Melodious part, such concord is in Heaven.
Thee, Father, first they sung, omnipotent,
Immutable, immortal, infinite,
Eternal King; the Author of all being,
Fountain of light, thyself invisible
Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sittest
Throned inaccessible, but when thou shadest
The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear,
Yet dazzle Heaven, that brightest seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
Thee next they sang, of all creation first,
Begotten Son, divine similitude,
In whose conspicuous countenance, without cloud
Made visible, the Almighty Father shines,
Whom else no creature can behold; on thee
Impressed the effulgence of his glory abides,
Transfused on thee his ample spirit rests.
He Heaven of Heavens, and all the powers therein,
By thee created, and by thee threw down
The aspiring dominations: thou that day
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
Nor stop thy flaming chariot wheels, that shook
Heaven's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks
Thou drovest of warring angels disarrayed.
Back from pursuit thy powers with loud acclaim
Thee only extolled, Son of thy Father's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes.
Not so on man; him, through their malice fallen,
Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
So strictly, but much more to pity incline:
No sooner did thy dear and only Son
Perceive thee purposed not to doom frail man
So strictly, but much more to pity inclined,
He, to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
Of mercy and justice in thy face discerned,
Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
Second to thee, offered himself to die

For man's offence. O unexampled love,
Love no where to be found less than divine!
Hail, Son of God, Saviour of men! thy name
Shall be the copious matter of my song
Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.
Thus they in Heaven, above the starry sphere,
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
Meanwhile upon the firm opacious globe
Of this round world, whose first convex divides
Their luminous inferior orbs, inclosed
From Chaos and th' inroad of Darkness old,
Satan alighted walks: a globe far off
It seemed, now seems a boundless continent,
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night
Starless exposed, and ever-threatening storms
Of Chaos blustering round, inclement sky;
Save on that side which from the wall of Heaven,
Though distant far, some small reflection gains
Of glimmering air, less vexed with tempest loud:
Here walked the fiend at large in spacious field.
As when a vulture, on Imaus bred,
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey
To gorge the flesh of lambs or yearling kids,
On hills where flocks are fed, flies towards the springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;
But in his way lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
With sails and wind their cany wagons light;
So, on this windy sea of land, the fiend
Walked up and down alone, bent on his prey;
Alone, for other creature in this place,
Living or lifeless to be found was none;
None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
Up hither like aerial vapours flew
Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
With vanity had filled the works of men;
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,
Or happiness in this or the other life;
All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
Nought seeking but the praise of men, here find
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds;
All the unaccomplished works of Nature's hand,
Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mixed,
Dissolved on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
Till final dissolution wander here,
Not in the neighb'ring moon, as some have dreamed:
Those argent fields more likely habitants,
Translated saints, or middle spirits, hold
Betwixt the angelical and human kind.
Hither, of ill-joined sons and daughters born,
First from the ancient world those giants came
With many a vain exploit though then renowned:
The builders next of Babel on the plain
Of Sennaar, and still with vain design
New Babels, had they wherewithal would build:
Others came single: he who, to be deemed
A god, leaped fondly into Ætna flames,
Empedocles; and he who, to enjoy
Plato's elysium, leaped into the sea,
Cleombrotus; and many more too long,
Embryos, and idiots, eremites, and friars
White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery
Here pilgrims roam, that strayed so far to seek
In Golgotha him dead, who lives in Heaven;
And they who, to be sure of Paradise,
Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguised;
They pass the planets seven, and pass the fixed,
And crystalline sphere, whose balance weighs
The trepidation talked, and that first moved:
And now saint Peter at Heaven's wicket seems
To wait them with his keys, and now at foot
Of Heaven's ascent they lift their feet, when lo
A violent cross wind from either coast
Blows them transverse ten thousand leagues awry
Into the devious air; then might ye see
Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers tost
And fluttered into rags; then reliques, beads,
Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
The sport of winds: all these, upwhirled aloft,
Fly o'er the backside of the world far off
Into a limbo large and broad, since called
The Paradise of fools, to few unknown
Long after, now unpeopled, and untrod.
All this dark globe the fiend found as he passed,
And long he wandered till at last a gleam
Of dawning light turned thitherward in haste
His travelled steps: far distant he descries,
Ascending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of Heaven, a structure high;
At top whereof, but far more rich, appeared
The work as of a kingly palace gate,
With frontispiece of diamond and gold
Embellished; thick with sparkling orient gems
The portal shone, inimitable on earth
By model, or by shading pencil drawn.
The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw
Angels ascending and descending, bands
Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz
Dreaming by night under the open sky,
And waking cried, "This is the gate of Heaven."
Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
There always, but drawn up to Heaven sometimes
Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flowed
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
Who after came from earth, sailing arrived
Wafted by angels, or flew o'er the lake
Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
The fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss;

Direct against which opened from beneath,
Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
A passage down to th' earth, a passage wide,
Wider by far than that of aftertimes
Over mount Sion, and, though that were large
Over the promised land to God so dear:
By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
On high behests his angels to and fro
Passed frequent, and his eye with choice regard
From Paneas, the fount of Jordan's flood,
To Beërsaba, where the Holy Land
Borders on Egypt and the Arabian shore;
So wide the opening seemed, where bounds were set
To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
Satan from hence, now on the lower stair,
That scaled by steps of gold to Heaven gate,
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this world at once. As when a scout,
Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
All night, at last by break of cheerful dawn,
Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some foreign land.
First seen, or some renowned metropolis
With glistering spires and pinnacles adorned,
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams:
Such wonder seized, though after Heaven seen,
The spirit malign, but much more envy seized,
At sight of all this world beheld so fair.
Round he surveys, (and well might, where he stood
So high above the circling canopy
Of night's extended shade) from eastern point
Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
Beyond the horizon; then from pole to pole
He views in breadth, and without longer pause
Downright into the world's first region throws
His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
Through the pure marble air, his oblique way
Amongst innumerable stars that shone,
Stars distant, but nigh hand seemed other worlds;
Or other worlds they seemed, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperean gardens famed of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery vales,
Thrice happy isles; but who dwelt happy there
He stayed not to inquire; above them all
The golden sun, in splendour likest Heaven,
Allured his eye; thither his course he bends
Through the calm firmament (but up or down,
By centre, or eccentric, hard to tell,
Or longitude,) where the great luminary,
Aloof the vulgar constellations thick
That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
Dispenses light from far: they, as they move
Their starry dance, in numbers that compute
Days, months, and years, towards his all-cheering lamp
Turns swift their various motions, or are turned
By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
The universe, and to each inward part
With gentle penetration, though unseen,
Shoots invisible virtue even to the deep;
So wondrously was set his station bright.
There lands the fiend, a spot like which perhaps
Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb,
Through his glazed optic tube, yet never saw.
The place he found beyond expression bright,
Compared with aught on earth, metal or stone;
Not all parts like, but all alike informed
With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire;
If metal, part seemed gold, part silver clear;
If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
In Aaron's breastplate, and a stone besides
Imagined rather oft than elsewhere seen,
That stone, or like to that which here below
Philosophers in vain so long have sought,
In vain, though by their powerful art they bind
Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound
In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
Drained through a limbec to his native form.
What wonder then if fields and regions here
Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
Potable gold, when with one virtuous touch
The arch chymic sun, so far from us remote,
Produces, with terrestrial humour mixed,
Here in the dark so many precious things
Of colour glorious, and effect so rare?
Here matter new to gaze the Devil met
Undazzled; far and wide his eye commands;
For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,
But all sunshine, as when his beams at noon
Culminate from the equator, as they now
Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
Shadow from body opaque can fall; and the air
No where so clear, sharpened his visual ray
To objects distant far, whereby he soon
Saw within ken a glorious angel stand,
The same whom John saw also in the sun:
His back was turned, but not his brightness hid:
Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar
Circled his head, nor less his locks behind
Illustrious on his shoulders fledged with wings
Lay waving round; on some great charge employed
He seemed or fixed in cogitation deep.
Glad was the spirit impure, as now in hope
To find who might direct his wandering flight
To Paradise, the happy seat of man,
His journey's end, and our beginning woe.
But first he casts to change his proper shape,
Which else might work him danger or delay:
And now a stripling cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
Youth smiled celestial, and to every limb
Suitable grace diffused, so well he feigned:
Under a coronet his flowing hair
In curls on either cheek played; wings he wore

Of many a co.oured plume, sprinkled with gold;
His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
Before his decent steps a silver wand.
He drew not nigh unheard; the angel bright,
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turned,
Admonished by his ear, and straight was known
The archangel Uriel, one of the seven
Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
Stand ready at command, and are his eyes
That run through all the Heavens, or down to the earth
Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,
O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts.
"Uriel, for thou of those seven spirits that stand
In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,
The first art wont his great authentic will
Interpreter through highest Heaven to bring,
Where all his sons thy embassy attend;
And here art likeliest by supreme decree
Like honour to obtain, and as his eye
To visit oft this new creation round;
Unspeakable desire to see and know
All these his wondrous works, but chiefly man,
His chief delight and favour, him for whom
All these his work so wondrous he ordained,
Hath brought me from the choirs of cherubim
Alone thus wandering. Brightest seraph, tell
In which of all these shining orbs hath man
His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell;
That I may find him, and with secret gaze
Or open admiration him behold,
On whom the great Creator hath bestowed
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces poured;
That both in him and all things, as is meet,
The universal Maker we may praise;
Who justly hath driven out his rebel foes
To deepest hell, and to repair that loss
Created this new happy race of men
To serve him better: wise are all his ways."
So spake the false dissembler unperceived;
For neither man nor angel can discern
Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
Invisible, except to God alone,
By his permissive will, through Heaven and earth:
And oft, though wisdom wake suspicion sleeps
At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
Where no ill seems: which now for once beguiled
Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held
The sharpest-sighted spirit of all in Heaven;
Who to the fraudulent impostor foul,
In his uprightness, answer thus returned.
"Fair angel, thy desire, which tends to know
The works of God, thereby to glorify
The great Workmaster, leads to no excess
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps
Contented with report, hear only in Heaven:
For wonderful indeed are all his works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance always with delight;
But what created mind can comprehend
Their number, or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?
I saw when at his word the formless mass,
This world's material mould, came to a heap:
Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar
Stood ruled, stood vast infinitude confined;
Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung:
Swift to their several quarters hasted then,
The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire;
And this ethereal quintessence of Heaven
Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
That rolled orbicular, and turned to stars
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
Each had his place appointed, each his course;
The rest in circuit walls this universe.
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
With light from hence, though but reflected, shines:
That place is earth, the seat of man, that light
His day, which else, as the other hemisphere,
Night would invade; but there the neighbouring moon
(So call that opposite fair star) her aid
Timely interposes, and her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing, through mid Heaven,
With borrowed light her countenance triform
Hence fills and empties to enlighten the earth,
And in her pale dominion checks the night.
That spot to which I point is Paradise,
Adam's abode; those lofty shades, his bower.
Thy way thou can'st not miss, me mine requires."
Thus said, he turned; and Satan, bowing low
As to superior spirits is wont in Heaven,
Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
Took leave, and toward the coast of earth beneath
Down from th' ecliptic, sped with hoped success,
Throws his steep flight in many an airy wheel;
Nor stayed, till on Niphates' top he lights.

BOOK IV.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprise which he undertook alone against God and man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions, fear, envy, and despair; but at length confirms himself in evil; journeys on to Paradise, whose outward prospect and situation is described; overleaps the bounds; sits in the shape of a cormorant on the tree of life, as highest in the garden, to look about him. The garden described; Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve; his wonder at their excellent form and happy state, but with resolution to work their fall; overhears their discourse, thence gathers that the tree of knowledge was forbidden them to eat of, under penalty

of death; and thereon intends to found his temptation, by seducing them to transgress; then leaves them a while, to know further of their state by some other means. Meanwhile Uriel, descending on a sun-beam, warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil spirit had escaped the deep, and passed at noon by his sphere, in the shape of a good angel, down to Paradise, discovered after by his furious gestures in the mount. Gabriel promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest; their bower described; their evening worship. Gabriel, drawing forth his bands of nightwatch to walk the round of Paradise, appoints two strong angels to Adam's bower, lest the evil spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping; there they find him at the ear of Eve, tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom questioned, he scornfully answers, prepares resistance, but, hindered by a sign from Heaven, flies out of Paradise.

O for that warning voice, which he who saw
Th' Apocalypse heard cry in Heaven aloud,
Then when the dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be revenged on men,
Wo to th' inhabitants on earth! that now,
While time was, our first parents had been warned
The coming of their secret foe, and 'scaped.
Haply so 'scaped his mortal snare: for now
Satan, now first inflamed with rage came down,
The tempter ere the accuser of mankind,
To wreak on innocent frail man his loss
Of that first battle, and his flight to hell:
Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
Begins his dire attempt, which, nigh the birth,
Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,
And like a devilish engine back recoils
Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
The hell within him; for within him hell
He brings, and round about him, nor from hell
One step, no more than from himself, can fly
By change of place: now conscience wakes despair,
That slumbered, wakes the bitter memory
Of what he was, what is, and what must be
Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
Sometimes towards Eden, which now in his view
Lay pleasant, his grieved look he fixes sad;
Sometimes towards Heaven, and the full blazing sun,
Which now sat high in his meridian tower:
Then, much revolving, thus in sighs began—
"O thou, that with surpassing glory crowned,
Lookest from thy sole dominion like the God
Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminished heads; to thee I call,
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
O Sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
That bring to my remembrance from what state
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down
Warring in Heaven against Heaven's matchless King;
Ah! wherefore! he deserved no such return
From me, whom he created what I was
In that bright eminence, and with his good
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.
What could be less than to afford him praise,
The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,
How due! yet all his good proved ill in me
And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
I 'sdained subjection, and thought one step higher
Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
The debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burdensome still paying, still to owe,
Forgetful what from him I still received,
And understood not that a grateful mind
By owing owes not, but still pays at once
Indebted and discharged; what burden then?
O had his powerful destiny ordained
Me some inferior angel, I had stood
Then happy; no unbounded hope had raised
Ambition! Yet why not? some other power
As great might have aspired, and me, though mean,
Drawn to his part; but other powers as great
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within
Or from without, to all temptations armed.
Hadst thou the same free will and power to stand?
Thou hadst: whom hadst thou then or what to accuse,
But Heaven's free love dealt equally to all?
Be then this love accused, since love or hate,
To me alike, it deals eternal wo.
Nay, cursed be thou; since against his thy will
Chose freely what it now so justly rues
Me miserable! which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell;
And, in the lowest deep, a lower deep
Still threatening to devour me opens wide,
To which the hell I suffer seems a Heaven.
O then at last relent: is there no place
Left for repentance, none for pardon left?
None left but by submission; and that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
Among the spirits beneath, whom I seduced
With other promises and other vaunts
Than to submit, boasting I could subdue
Th' Omnipotent. Ay me! they little know
How dearly I abide that boast so vain,
Under what torments inwardly I groan,
While they adore me on the throne of hell.
With diadem and sceptre high advanced,
The lower still I fall, only supreme
In misery; such joy ambition finds.
But say I could repent, and could obtain,
By act of grace, my former state; how soon
Would height recall high thoughts, how soon unsay
What feigned submission swore! ease would recant
Vows made in pain, as violent and void:
For never can true reconcilement grow
Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep,
Which would but lead me to a worse relapse

And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear
Short intermission bought with double smart.
This knows my Punisher; therefore as far
From granting he, as I from begging peace:
All hope excluded thus, behold, in stead
Of us outcast, exiled, his new delight,
Mankind created, and for him this world.
So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear,
Farewell remorse! all good to me is lost;
Evil, be thou my good! by thee at least
Divided empire with Heaven's King I hold,
By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
As man ere long, and this new world, shall know."
Thus while he spake, each passion dimmed his face
Thrice changed with pale, ire, envy, and despair;
Which marred his borrowed visage, and betrayed
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld:
For heavenly minds from such distempers foul
Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,
Each perturbation smoothed with outward calm,
Artificer of fraud; and was the first
That practised falsehood under saintly show,
Deep malice to conceal, couched with revenge:
Yet not enough had practised to deceive
Uriel once warned; whose eye pursued him down
The way he went, and on the Assyrian mount
Saw him disfigured, more than could befal
Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce
He marked, and mad demeanour, then alone,
As he supposed, all unobserved, unseen.
So on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer crowns with her inclosure green,
As with rural mound, the champaign head
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access denied; and over head up grew
Insuperable height of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm
A sylvan scene, and, as the ranks ascend
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
The verdurous wall of Paradise upsprung:
Which to our general sire gave prospect large
Into his nether empire neighbouring round.
And higher than that wall a circling row
Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,
Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
Appeared, with gay enamelled colours mixed:
On which the sun more glad impressed his beams
Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
When God hath showered the earth: so lovely seemed
That landscape: and of pure now purer air
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All sadness but despair: now gentle gales,
Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
Mozambic, off at sea northeast winds blow
Sabean odours from the spicy shore
Of Araby the blest: with such delay
Well pleased they slack their course, and many a league
Cheered with the grateful smell, old Ocean smiles:
So entertained those odorous sweets the fiend,
Who came their bane, though with them better pleased
Than Asmodëus with the fishy fume
That drove him, though enamoured, from the spouse
Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent
From Medea post to Egypt, there fast bound.
Now to th' ascent of that steep savage hill
Satan had journeyed on, pensive and slow;
But further way found none, so thick entwined,
As one continued brake, the undergrowth
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplexed
All path of man or beast that passed that way:
One gate there only was, and that looked east
On th' other side: which when th' arch-felon saw
Due entrance he disdained, and, in contempt,
At one slight bound high overleaped all bound
Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve,
In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold:
Or as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
Cross-barred and bolted fast, fear no assault,
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:
So climb this first grand thief into God's fold;
So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.
Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life,
The middle tree and highest there that grew,
Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life
Thereby regained, but sat devising death
To them who lived; nor on the virtue thought
Of that life-giving plant, but only used
For prospect, what, well used, had been the pledge
Of immortality. So little knows
Any, but God alone, to value right
The good before him, but perverts best things
To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
Beneath him with new wonder now he views,
To all delight of human sense exposed,
In narrow room Nature's whole wealth, yea more,
A Heaven on earth; for blissful Paradise
Of God the garden was, by him in the east
Of Eden planted; Eden stretched her line
From Auran eastward to the royal towers
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings

Or where the sons of Eden long before
Dwelt in Telassar: in this pleasant soil
His far more pleasant garden God ordained;
Out of the fertile ground he caused to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
And all amid them stood the tree of life,
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold; and next to life,
Our death, the tree of knowledge grew fast by,
Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.
Southward through Eden went a river large,
Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill
Passed underneath ingulphed; for God had thrown
That mountain as his garden mould high raised
Upon the rapid current, which, through veins
Of porous earth, with kindly thirst updrawn,
Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
Watered the garden; thence united fell
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood.
Which from his darksome passage now appears
And now, divided into four main streams,
Runs diverse, wandering many a famous realm
And country, whereof here needs no account;
But rather to tell how, if Art could tell,
How from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With mazy error under pendent shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flowers, worthy of Paradise, which not nice Art
In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon
Poured forth profuse on hill and dale and plain,
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierced shade
Embrowned the noontide bowers: thus was this place
A happy rural seat of various view;
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,
Others whose fruit, burnished with golden rind,
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true,
If true, here only, and of delicious taste:
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interposed,
Or palmy hillock; or the flowery lap
Of some irriguous valley spread her store,
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose:
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant; meanwhile murmuring waters fall
Down the slope hills, dispersed, or in a lake,
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crowned
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
The birds their choir apply; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,
Knit with the Graces and the Hours, in dance
Led on the eternal spring. Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis
Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world; nor that sweet grove
Of Daphne by Orontes, and the inspired
Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian isle,
Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Lybian Jove,
Hid Amalthea, and her florid son,
Young Bacchus, from his step-dame Rhea's eye;
Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard,
Mount Amara, though this by some supposed
True Paradise, under the Ethiop line
By Nilus' head, enclosed with shining rock,
A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
From this Assyrian garden, where the fiend
Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
Of living creatures, new to sight, and strange.
Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
Godlike erect, with native honour clad,
In naked majesty seemed lords of all:
And worthy seemed; for in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure
(Severe, but in true filial freedom placed,)
Whence true authority in men; though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed;
For contemplation he and valour formed,
For softness she and sweet attractive grace;
He for God only, she for God in him:
His fair large front and eye sublime declared
Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad
She, as a veil, down to the slender waist
Her unadorned golden tresses wore
Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved
As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied
Subjection, but required with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best received,
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,
And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay.
Nor those mysterious parts were then concealed;
Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame
Of nature's works, honour dishonourable,
Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind
With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure
And banished from man's life his happiest life,
Simplicity and spotless innocence!
So passed they naked on, nor shunned the sight
Of God or angel, for they thought no ill:
So hand in hand they passed, the loveliest pair
That ever since in love's embraces met;
Adam the godliest man of men since born
His sons; the fairest of her daughters Eve.
Under a tuft of shade, that on a green
Stood whispering soft, by a fresh fountain side

They sat them down; and, after no more toil
Of their sweet gardening labour than sufficed
To recommend cool zephyr, and made ease
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite
More grateful, to their supper fruits they fell,
Nectarine fruits which the compliant boughs
Yielded them, side-long as they sat recline,
On the soft downy bank damasked with flowers:
The savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind
Still as they thirsted scoop the brimming stream;
Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles
Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as beseems
Fair couple, linked in happy nuptial league,
Alone as they. About them frisking played
All beasts of the earth, since wild, and of all chase,
In wood or wilderness, forest or den;
Sporting the lion ramped, and in his paw
Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
Gambolled before them; the unwieldy elephant,
To make them mirth, used all his might and wreathed
His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly,
Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine,
His braided train, and of his fatal guile
Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass
Couched, and, now filled with pasture, gazing sat,
Or bedward ruminating; for the sun,
Declined, was hasting now with prone career
To the ocean isles, and in the ascending scale
Of Heaven the stars that usher evening rose:
When Satan, still in gaze, as first he stood,
Scarce thus at length failed speech recovered sad.

"O hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold!
Into our room of bliss thus high advanced
Creatures of other mould, earthborn perhaps,
Not spirits, yet to heavenly spirits bright
Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
In them divine resemblance, and such grace
The hand that formed them on their shape hath poured.
Ah, gentle pair! ye little think how nigh
Your change approaches, when all these delights
Will vanish, and deliver ye to wo,
More wo, the more your taste is now of joy;
Happy, but for so happy ill secured
Long to continue, and this high seat your Heaven
Ill fenced for Heaven to keep out such a foe
As now is entered; yet no purposed foe
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
Though I unpitied: league with you I seek,
And mutual amity, so straight, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me
Henceforth; my dwelling haply may not please,
Like this fair Paradise, your sense; yet such
Accept your Maker's work; he gave it me,
Which I as freely give: hell shall unfold,
To entertain you two, her widest gates,
And send forth all her kings; there will be room,
Not like these narrow limits, to receive
Your numerous offspring; if no better place,
Thank him who puts me loth to this revenge
On you who wrong me not, for him who wronged.
And should I at your harmless innocence
Melt as I do, yet public reason just,
Honour and empire with revenge enlarged,
By conquering this new world, compels me now
To do what else, though damned, I should abhor."

So spake the fiend, and with necessity,
The tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds.
Then from his lofty stand on that high tree
Down he alights among the sportful herd
Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
Now other, as their shape served best his end
Nearer to view his prey, and unespied
To mark what of their state he more might learn,
By word or action marked: about them round
A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;
Then as a tyger, who by chance hath spied
In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
Straight couches close, then, rising, changes oft
His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
Whence rushing he might surest seize them both,
Griped in each paw: when Adam, first of men,
To first of women Eve, thus moving speech,
Turned him, all ear to hear new utterance flow.

"Sole partner, and sole part, of all these joys,
Dearer thyself than all: needs must the Power
That made us, and for us this ample world
Be infinitely good, and of his good
As liberal and free as infinite;
That raised us from the dust, and placed us here
In all this happiness, who at his hand
Have nothing merited, nor can perform
Aught whereof he hath need: he who requires
From us no other service than to keep
This one, this easy charge, 'of all the trees
In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
So various, not to taste that only tree
Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life;'
So near grows death to life, whate'er death is,
Some dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou knowest
God hath pronounced it death to taste that tree,
The only sign of our obedience left,
Among so many signs of power and rule
Conferred upon us, and dominion given
Over all other creatures that possess
Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard
One easy prohibition, who enjoy
Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
Unlimited of manifold delights:
But let us ever praise him, and extol
His bounty, following our delightful task,
To prune these growing plants, and tend these flowers,
Which, were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet."

To whom thus Eve replied:—"O thou for whom

And from whom I was formed, flesh of thy flesh,
And without whom am to no end, my guide
And head! what thou hast said is just and right.
For we to him indeed all praises owe,
And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou
Like consort to thyself canst no where find.
That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awaked, and found myself reposed
Under a shade on flowers, much wondering where
And what I was, whence thither brought, and how,
Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound
Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
Into a liquid plain, then stood unmoved
Pure as the expanse of Heaven; I thither went
With unexperienced thought, and laid me down
On the green bank to look into the clear
Smooth lake, that to me seemed another sky.
As I bent down to look, just opposite
A shape within the watery gleam appeared,
Bending to look on me: I started back,
It started back; but pleased I soon returned,
Pleased it returned as soon with answering looks
Of sympathy and love: there I had fixed
Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warned me: 'What thou seest,
What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;
With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
And I will bring thee where no shadow stays
Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he
Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy,
Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear
Multitudes like thyself, and thence be called
Mother of human race.' What could I do,
But follow straight, invisibly thus led?
Till I espied thee, fair indeed and tall,
Under a plantain; yet methought less fair,
Less winning soft, less amiably mild,
Than that smooth watery image: back I turned;
Thou following criedst aloud, 'Return, fair Eve,
Whom fliest thou? whom thou fliest, of him thou art,
His flesh, his bone: to give thee being, I lent
Out of my side to thee nearest my heart,
Substantial life, to have thee by my side
Henceforth an individual solace dear;
Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim
My other half.' With that thy gentle hand
Seized mine; I yielded, and from that time see
How beauty is excelled by manly grace,
And wisdom, which alone is truly fair."
So spake our general mother, and with eyes
Of conjugal attraction, unreproved,
And meek surrender, half-embracing leaned
On our first father; half her swelling breast
Naked met his, under the flowing gold
Of her loose tresses hid: he, in delight

Smiled with superior love, as Jupiter
On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds
That shed May flowers; and pressed her matron lip
With kisses pure: aside the devil turned
For envy, yet with jealous leer malign
Eyed them askance, and to himself thus plained
Both of her beauty and submissive charms,
"Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two,
Imparadised in one another's arms,
The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
Of bliss on bliss; while I to hell am thrust,
Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
Among our other torments not the least,
Still unfulfilled, with pain of longing pines.
Yet let me not forget what I have gained
From their own mouths: all is not theirs, it seems:
One fatal tree there stands, of knowledge called,
Forbidden them to taste: knowledge forbidden?
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord
Envy them that? can it be sin to know?
Can it be death? and do they only stand
By ignorance? is that their happy state,
The proof of their obedience and their faith?
O fair foundation laid whereon to build
Their ruin! Hence I will excite their minds
With more desire to know, and to reject
Envious commands, invented with design
To keep them low, whom knowledge might exalt
Equal with gods: aspiring to be such,
They taste and die; what likelier can ensue?
But first with narrow search I must walk round
This garden, and no corner leave unspied:
A chance but chance may lead where I may meet
Some wandering spirit of Heaven by fountain side,
Or in thick shade retired, from him to draw
What further would be learned. Live while ye may
Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed."
So saying, his proud step he scornful turned,
But with sly circumspection, and began,
Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale his roam.
Meanwhile in utmost longitude, where Heaven
With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun
Slowly descended, and with right aspect
Against the eastern gate of Paradise
Levelled his evening rays: it was a rock
Of alabaster, piled up to the clouds,
Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent
Accessible from earth, one entrance high;
The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
Still as it rose, impossible to climb.
Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,
Chief of the angelic guards, awaiting night:
About him exercised heroic games
The unarmed youth of Heaven, but nigh at hand

Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
Hung high with diamond flaming, and with gold.
Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even
On a sunbeam, swift as a shooting star,
In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fired
Impress the air, and shows the mariner
From what point of his compas to beware
Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste.

"Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given
Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place
No evil thing approach or enter in.
This day at height of noon came to my sphere
A spirit, zealous, as he seemed, to know
More of the Almighty's works, and chiefly man,
God's latest image: I described his way
Bent all on speed, and marked his airy gait;
But in the mount that lies from Eden north,
Where he first lighted, soon discerned his looks
Alien from Heaven, with passions foul obscured:
Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade
Lost sight of him: one of the banished crew,
I fear, hath ventured from the deep, to raise
New troubles; him thy care must be to find."

To whom the winged warrior thus returned.
"Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sittest,
See far and wide: in at this gate none pass
The vigilance here placed, but such as come
Well known from Heaven; and since meridian hour
No creature thence: if spirit of other sort,
So minded, have o'erleaped these earthly bounds
On purpose, hard thou knowest it to exclude
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar.
But if within the circuit of these walks,
In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
Thou tellest, by morrow dawning I shall know."

So promised he; and Uriel to his charge
Returned on that bright beam, whose point now raised
Bore him slope downward to the sun now fallen
Beneath the Azores; whether the prime orb,
Incredible how swift, had thither rolled
Diurnal, or this less voluble earth,
By shorter flight to the east had left him there
Arraying with reflected purple and gold
The clouds that on his western throne attend.
Now came still evening on, and twilight gray
Had in her sober livery all things clad;
Silence accompanied, for beast and bird,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale;
She all night long her amorous descant sung;
Silence was pleased; now glowed the firmament
With living sapphires; Hesperus, that led
The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at length,
Apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

When Adam thus to Eve. "Fair consort, the hour
Of night, and all things now retired to rest,
Mind us of like repose, since God hath set
Labour and rest, as day and night, to men
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep,
Now falling with soft slumb'rous weight, inclines
Our eyelids: other creatures all day long
Rove idle, unemployed and less need rest:
Man hath his daily work of body or mind
Appointed, which declares his dignity,
And the regard of Heaven on all his ways;
While other animals unactive range,
And of their doings God takes no account.
To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east
With first approach of light, we must be risen,
And at our pleasant labour to reform
Yon flowery arbours, yonder alleys green,
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,
That mock our scant manuring, and require
More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth
Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums,
That lie bestrown, unsightly and unsmooth,
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease:
Meanwhile, as Nature wills, night bids us rest."

To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorned
"My author and disposer, what thou bid'st
Unargued I obey: so God ordains;
God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise
With thee conversing I forget all time;
All seasons and their change, all please alike
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glistering with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild; then silent night,
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of Heaven, her starry train:
But neither breath of morn, when she ascends
With charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,
Glistering with dew; nor fragrance after showers,
Nor grateful evening mild; nor silent night,
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
Or glittering starlight, without thee is sweet.
But wherefore all night long shine these? for whom
This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?"

To whom our general ancestor replied.
"Daughter of God and man, accomplished Eve,
These have their course to finish round the earth,
By morrow evening, and from land to land
In order, though to nations yet unborn,
Ministering light prepared, they set and rise;
Lest total darkness should by night regain
Her old possession, and extinguish life

In nature and all things, which these soft fires
Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat
Of various influence foment and warm,
Temper or nourish, or in part shed down
Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
On earth, made hereby apter to receive
Perfection from the sun's more potent ray.
These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,
Shine not in vain; nor think, though men were none,
That Heaven would want spectators, God want praise;
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep;
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold
Both day and night: how often from the steep
Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
Singing their great Creator? oft in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds
In full harmonic number joined, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven."
Thus talking, hand in hand alone they passed
On to their blissful bower: it was a place
Chosen by the sovereign Planter, when he framed
All things to man's delightful use; the roof
Of thickest covert was interwoven shade
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf: on either side
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamine
Reared high their flourishing heads between, and wrought
Mosaic; under foot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broidered the ground, more coloured than with stone
Of costliest emblem: other creature here,
Beast, bird, insect, or worm durst enter none,
Such was their awe of man. In shadier bower,
More sacred and sequestered, though but feigned,
Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor nymph
Nor fauns haunted. Here, in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet swelling herbs,
Espoused Eve decked first her nuptial bed,
And heavenly choirs the hymenæan sung,
What day the genial angel to our sire
Brought her, in naked beauty more adorned,
More lovely than Pandora, whom the god
Endowed with all their gifts, and O too like
In sad event, when to the unwiser son
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnared
Mankind with her fair looks, to be avenged
On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.
Thus, at their shady lodge arrived, both stood,
Both turned, and under open sky adored
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and Heaven
Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,
And starry pole: "Thou also mad'st the night,
Maker omnipotent, and thou the day,
Which we, in our appointed work employed
Have finished, happy in our mutual help
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
Ordained by thee; and this delicious place
For us too large, where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
But thou hast promised from us two a race
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep."
This said unanimous, and other rites
Observing none, but adoration pure
Which God likes best, into their inmost bower
Handed they went; and, eased the putting off
These troublesome disguises which we wear,
Straight side by side were laid; nor turned, I ween,
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refused:
Whatever hypocrites austerely talk
Of purity, and place, and innocence,
Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all
Our Maker bids increase; who bids abstain
But our destroyer, foe to God and man?
Hail, wedded love, mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise of all things common else!
By thee adult'rous lust was driven from men
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee,
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother first were known.
Far be it that I should write thee sin or blame,
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets,
Whose bed is undefiled and chaste pronounced,
Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs used!
Here love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings
Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendeared,
Casual fruition; nor in court amours,
Mixed dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
Or serenade, which the starved lover sings
To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.
These lulled by nightingales, embracing slept,
And on their naked limbs the flowery roof
Showered roses, which the morn repaired. Sleep on,
Blest pair; and O yet happiest, if ye seek
No happier state, and know to know no more.
Now had night measured with her shadowy cone
Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault,
And from their ivory port the cherubim,

Forth issuing at the accustomed hour, stood armed
To their night watches in warlike parade,
When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake.
"Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the south
With strictest watch; these other wheel the north;
Our circuit meets full west." As flame they part,
Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear.
From these, two strong and subtle spirits he called
That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge.
"Ithuriel and Zephon, with winged speed
Search through this garden, leave unsearched no nook:
But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge,
Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.
This evening from the sun's decline arrived
Who tells of some infernal spirit seen
Hitherward bent (who could have thought?) escaped
The bars of hell, on errand bad no doubt:
Such where ye find, seize fast and hither bring."
So saying, on he led his radiant files,
Dazzling the moon; these to the bower direct
In search of whom they sought; him there they found
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve,
Assaying by his devilish art to reach
The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams;
Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
The animal spirits, that from pure blood arise
Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise
At least distempered, discontented thoughts,
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits engendering pride.
Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear
Touched lightly; for no falsehood can endure
Touch of celestial temper, but returns
Of force to its own likeness: up he starts
Discovered and surprised. As when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid
Fit for the tun some magazine to store
Against a rumoured war, the smutty grain,
With sudden blaze diffused, inflames the air:
So started up in his own shape the fiend.
Back stepp those two fair angels, half amazed
So sudden to behold the grisly king;
Yet thus, unmoved with fear, accost him soon.
"Which of those rebel spirits adjudged to Hell
Comest thou, escaped thy prison? and, transformed
Why sat'st thou like an enemy in wait,
Here watching at the head of these that sleep?"
"Know ye not then," said Satan, filled with scorn,
"Know ye not me? ye knew me once no mate
For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar;
Not to know me argues yourselves unknown,
The lowest of your throng; or, if you know,
Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
Your message, like to end as much in vain?"
To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with scorn:
"Think not, revolted spirit, thy shape the same,
Or undiminished brightness to be known,
As when thou stood'st in Heaven upright and pure;
That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
Departed from thee; and thou resemblest now
Thy sin and place of doom, obscure and foul.
But come, for thou, be sure, shall give account
To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
This place inviolable, and these from harm."
So spake the cherub; and this grave rebuke,
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace
Invincible; abashed the devil stood,
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw, and pined
His loss; but chiefly to find her observed
His lustre visibly impaired; yet seemed
Undaunted. "If I must contend," said he,
"Best with the best, the sender not the sent,
Or all at once; more glory will be won,
Or less be lost." "Thy fear," said Zephon bold,
"Will save us trial what the least can do
Single against thee wicked, and thence weak."
The fiend replied not, overcome with rage;
But, like a proud steed reined, went haughty on,
Champing his iron curb: to strive or fly
He held it vain; awe from above had quelled
His heart, not else dismayed. Now drew they nigh
The western point, where those half-rounding guards
Just met, and closing stood in squadron joined,
Awaiting next command. To whom their chief,
Gabriel, from the front thus called aloud.
"O friends! I hear the tread of nimble feet
Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade;
And with them comes a third of regal port,
But faded splendour wan; who, by his gait
And fierce demeanour, seems the prince of hell,
Not likely to part hence without contest;
Stand firm, for in his look defiance lowers."
He scarce had ended, when those two approached,
And brief related whom they brought, where found,
How busied, in what form and posture couched.
To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake.
"Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescribed
To thy transgressions, and disturbed the charge
Of others, who approve not to transgress
By thy example, but have power and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place:
Employed, it seems, to violate sleep, and those
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?"
To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow

"Gabriel, thou hadst in Heaven the esteem of wise,
And such I held thee; but this question asked
Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?
Who would not, finding way, break loose from hell,
Though thither doomed? Thou wouldst thyself no doubt,
And boldly venture to whatever place
Farthest from pain, where thou mightest hope to change
Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
Dole with delight, which in this place I sought;
To thee no reason, who knowest only good,
But evil hast not tried: and wilt object
His will who bounds us? let him surer bar
His iron gates, if he intends our stay
In that dark durance: thus much what was asked.
The rest is true, they found me where they say;
But that implies not violence or harm."

Thus he in scorn. The warlike angel, moved,
Disdainfully half smiling, thus replied.
"O loss of one in Heaven to judge of wise,
Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew,
And now returns him from his prison 'scaped,
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither,
Unlicensed, from his bounds in hell prescribed;
So wise he judges it to fly from pain,
However, and to escape his punishment!
So judge thou still, presumptuous! till the wrath
Which thou incurrest by flying, meet thy flight
Sevenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to hell,
Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain
Can equal anger infinite provoked.
But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee
Came not all hell broke loose? is pain to them
Less pain, less to be fled? or thou than they
Less hardy to endure? Courageous chief!
The first in flight from pain! hadst thou alleged
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive."

To which the fiend thus answered, frowning stern,
"Not that I less endure or shrink from pain,
Insulting angel! well thou knowest I stood
Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid
The blasting vollied thunder made all speed,
And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.
But still thy words at random, as before,
Argue thy inexperience what behooves,
From hard assays and ill successes past,
A faithful leader, not to hazard all
Through ways of danger by himself untried:
I therefore, I alone first undertook
To wing the desolate abyss, and spy
This new created world, whereof in hell
Fame is not silent, here in hope to find
Better abode, and my afflicted powers
To settle here on earth, or in mid air;
Though for possession put to try once more
What thou and thy gay legions dare against;
Whose easier business were to serve their Lord
High up in Heaven, with songs to hymn his throne
And practised distances to cringe, not fight."

To whom the warrior angel soon replied.
"To say and straight unsay, pretending first
Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
Argues no leader but a liar traced,
Satan, and could'st thou faithful add? O name,
O sacred name of faithfulness profaned!
Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?
Army of fiends, fit body to fit head.
Was this your discipline and faith engaged,
Your military obedience, to dissolve
Allegiance to the acknowledged Power supreme?
And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
Patron of liberty, who more than thou
Once fawned, and cringed, and servilely adored
Heaven's awful Monarch? wherefore, but in hope
To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?
But mark what I arreed thee now, avaunt;
Fly thither whence thou fledst! if from this hour
Within these hallowed limits thou appear,
Back to the infernal pit I drag thee chained,
And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
The facile gates of hell too slightly barred."

So threatened he: but Satan to no threats
Gave heed, but waxing more in rage, replied.
"Then when I am thy captive talk of chains,
Proud limitary cherub! but ere then
Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
From my prevailing arm, though Heaven's King
Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
Used to the yoke, drawest his triumphant wheels
In progress through the road of Heaven star-paved."

While thus he spake, the angelic squadron bright
Turned fiery red, sharpening in mooned horns
Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
With ported spears, as thick as when a field
Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends
Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
Sways them; the careful ploughman doubting stands,
Lest on the threshing-floor his hopeful sheaves
Prove chaff. On the other side, Satan, alarmed,
Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremoved:
His stature reached the sky, and on his crest
Sat horror plumed; nor wanted in his grasp
What seemed both spear and shield: now dreadful deeds
Might have ensued, not only Paradise
In this commotion, but the starry cope
Of Heaven perhaps, or all the elements
At least had gone to wrack, disturbed and torn
With violence of this conflict, had not soon

The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
Hung forth in Heaven his golden scales, yet seen
Betwixt Astrea and the scorpion sign,
Wherein all things created first he weighed,
The pendulous round earth with balanced air
In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
Battles and realms: in these he put two weights,
The sequel each of parting and of fight;
The latter quick up flew, and kicked the beam;
Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the fiend.
"Satan, I know thy strength, and thou knowest
mine,
Neither our own, but given; what folly then
To boast what arms can do! since thine no more
Than Heaven permits, nor mine, though doubled
now
To trample thee as mire: for proof look up,
And read thy lot in yon celestial sign,
Where thou art weighed, and shown how light,
how weak,
If thou resist." The fiend looked up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft; nor more; but fled
Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night.

BOOK V.

THE ARGUMENT.

Morning approached, Eve relates to Adam her troublesome dream; he likes it not, yet comforts her; they come forth to their day labours; their morning hymn at the door of their bower. God, to render man inexcusable, sends Raphael to admonish him of his obedience, of his free estate, of his enemy near at hand, who he is, and why his enemy, and whatever else may avail Adam to know. Raphael comes down to Paradise; his appearance described; his coming discerned by Adam afar off sitting at the door of his bower; he goes out to meet him, brings him to his lodge, entertains him with the choicest fruits of Paradise got together by Eve; their discourse at table, Raphael performs his message, minds Adam of his state and of his enemy; relates at Adam's request, who that enemy is, and how he came to be so, beginning from his first revolt in Heaven, and the occasion thereof; how he drew his legions after him to the parts of the north, and there incited them to rebel with him, persuading all but only Abdiel a seraph, who in argument dissuades and opposes him, then forsakes him.

Now morn, her rosy steps in the eastern clime
Advancing, sowed the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam waked, so customed; for his sleep
Was airy light, from pure digestion bred,
And temperate vapours bland, which the only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song
Of birds on every bough; so much the more
His wonder was to find unwakened Eve
With tresses discomposed, and glowing cheek
As through unquiet rest; he on his side
Leaning half raised, with looks of cordial love
Hung over her enamoured, and beheld
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces; then with voice
Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
Her hand soft touching, whispered thus. "Awake,
My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,
Heaven's last best gift, my ever new delight!
Awake: the morning shines, and the fresh field
Calls us; we lose the prime, to mark how spring
Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
How nature paints her colours, how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet."
Such whispering waked her, but with startled eye
On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake.
"O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,
My glory, my perfection! glad I see
Thy face, and morn returned; for I this night
(Such night till this I never passed) have dreamed,
If dreamed, not, as I oft am wont, of thee,
Works of day past, or morrow's next design,
But of offence and trouble, which my mind
Knew never till this irksome night: methought
Close at mine ear one called me forth to walk
With gentle voice; I thought it thine: it said,
'Why sleepest thou, Eve? now is the pleasant time,
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
To the night-warbling bird, that now awake
Tunes sweetest his love-laboured song: now reigns
Full orbed the moon, and with more pleasing light
Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,
If none regard; Heaven wakes with all his eyes,
Whom to behold but thee, Nature's desire?
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.
I rose as at thy call, but found thee not;
To find thee I directed then my walk;
And on, methought, alone I passed through ways
That brought me on a sudden to the tree
Of interdicted knowledge: fair it seemed,
Much fairer to my fancy than by day:
And, as I wondering looked, beside it stood
One shaped and winged like one of those from
Heaven
By us oft seen; his dewy locks distilled
Ambrosia; on that tree he also gazed;
And 'O fair plant,' said he, 'with fruit surcharged,
Deigns none to ease thy load and taste thy sweet,
Nor God, nor man? is knowledge so despised?
Or envy, or what reserve forbids us taste?
Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
Longer thy offered good; why else set here?'
This said, he paused not, but with venturous arm
He plucked, he tasted; me damp horror chilled
At such bold words, vouched with a deed so bold:
But he thus, overjoyed. 'O fruit divine,
Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt,
Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit
For gods, yet able to make gods of men!
And why not gods of men, since good, the more

Communicated, more abundant grows,
The author not impaired, but honoured more!
Here happy creature, fair angelic Eve,
Partake thus also; happy though thou art,
Happier thou mayest be, worthier canst not be:
Taste this, and be henceforth among the gods
Thyself a goddess, not to earth confined,
But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes
Ascend to Heaven, by merit thine, and see
What life the gods live there, and such live thou.'
So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
Even to my mouth of that same fruit held part
Which he had plucked; the pleasant savoury smell
So quickened appetite, that I, methought,
Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
With him I flew, and underneath beheld
The earth outstretched immense, a prospect wide
And various: wondering at my flight and change
To this high exaltation; suddenly
My guide was gone, and I, methought sunk down,
And fell asleep; but O how glad I waked
To find this but a dream!" Thus Eve her night
Related, and thus Adam answered sad.
"Best image of myself, and dearer half,
The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep
Affects me equally; nor can I like
This uncouth dream, of evil sprung, I fear;
Yet evil whence? in thee can harbour none,
Created pure. But know, that in the soul
Are many lesser faculties, that serve
Reason as chief; among these fancy next
Her office holds; of all external things,
Which the five watchful senses represent,
She forms imaginations, airy shapes,
Which reason, joining or disjoining, frames
All what we affirm or what deny, and call
Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
Into her private cell when nature rests.
Oft in her absence mimic fancy wakes
To imitate her; but, misjoining shapes,
Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams,
Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.
Some such resemblances, methinks, I find
Of our last evening's talk, in this thy dream,
But with addition strange; yet be not sad.
Evil into the mind of God or man
May come and go, so unapproved, and leave
No spot or blame behind: which gives me hope,
That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream,
Waking thou never wilt consent to do.
Be not disheartened then, nor cloud those looks,
That wont to be more cheerful and serene,
Than when fair morning first smiles on the world;
And let us to our fresh employments rise
Amon the groves, the fountains, and the flowers,
That open now their choicest bosomed smells,
Reserved from night, and kept for thee in store."

So cheered he his fair spouse, and she was cheer'd;
But silently a gentle tear let fall
From either eye, and wiped them with her hair;
Two other precious drops that ready stood,
Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell
Kissed, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
And pious awe, that feared to have offended.
So all was cleared, and to the field they hasted.
But first, from under shady arborous roof,
Soon as they forth were come to open sight
Of dayspring, and the sun, who scarce uprisen,
With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean brim,
Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,
Discovering in wide landscape all the east
Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,
Lowly they bowed adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid
In various style; for neither various style
Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounced, or sung
Unmeditated; such prompt eloquence
Flowed from their lips, in prose or numerous verse
More tuneable than needed lute or harp
To add more sweetness; and they thus began.
"These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty! thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair: thyself how wondrous then!
Unspeakable, who sitst above these Heavens,
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.
Speak, ye who best can tell, ye sons of light,
Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night.
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in Heaven,
On earth join all ye creatures to extol
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.
Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,
If better thou belong not to the dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere,
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime.
Thou Sun, of this great world both eye and soul,
Acknowledge him thy greater, sound his praise
In thy eternal course, both when thou climbest,
And when high noon has gained, and when thou fallest.
Moon, that now meetest the orient sun, now fliest
With the fixed stars, fixed in their orb that flies
And ye five other wandering fires, that move
In mystic dance, not without song, resound
His praise, who out of darkness called up light.
Air, and ye elements, the eldest birth
Of nature's womb, that in quaternion run
Perpetual circle, multiform; and mix
And nourish all things; let your ceaseless change
Vary to our great Maker still new praise.

Ye mists and exhalations, that now rise
From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
In honour to the world's great Author rise;
Whether to deck with clouds the uncoloured sky,
Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers,
Rising or falling, still advance his praise.
His praise, ye winds, that from four quarters blow,
Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye pines,
With every plant in sign of worship wave.
Fountains, and ye that warble, as ye flow,
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
Join voices all ye living souls: ye birds,
That singing up to Heaven gate ascend,
Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.
Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk
The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep,
Witness if I be silent, morn or even,
To hill, or valley, fountain, or fresh shade,
Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
Hail! universal Lord, be bounteous still
To give us only good; and if the night
Have gathered aught of evil, or concealed,
Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark."
So prayed they innocent, and to their thoughts
Firm peace recovered soon and wonted calm.
On to their morning's rural work they haste,
Among sweet dews and flowers, where any row
Of fruit trees over-woody reached too far
Their pampered boughs, and needed hands to check
Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine
To wed her elm; she, spoused about him twines
Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
Her dower, the adopted clusters, to adorn
His barren leaves. Them thus employed beheld
With pity Heaven's high King, and to him called
Raphael, the sociable spirit, that deigned
To travel with Tobias, and secured
His marriage with the seven-times wedded maid.
"Raphael," said he, "thou hearest what stir on earth
Satan from hell escaped through the darksome gulf,
Hath raised in Paradise, and how disturbed
This night the human pair; how he designs
In them at once to ruin all mankind.
Go, therefore, half this day as friend with friend
Converse with Adam, in what bower or shade
Thou findest him from the heat of noon retired,
To respite his day labour with repast,
Or with repose; and such discourse bring on,
As may advise him of his happy state,
Happiness in his power left free to will,
Left to his own free will, his will though free,
Yet mutable; whence warn him to beware
He swerve not, too secure; tell him withal
His danger and from whom; what enemy,
Late fallen himself from Heaven, is plotting now
The fall of others from like state of bliss;
By violence? no, for that shall he withstood;
But by deceit and lies: this let him know,
Lest wilfully trangressing he pretend
Surprisal, unadmonished, unforewarned."
So spake the eternal Father and fulfilled
All justice: nor delayed the winged saint
After his charge received; but from among
Thousand celestial ardours, where he stood
Veiled with his gorgeous winds, up springing light,
Flew through the midst of Heaven; th' angelic choirs,
On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
Through all the empyreal road; till at the gate
Of Heaven arrived, the gate self-opened wide,
On golden hinges turning, as by work
Divine the sovereign architect had framed.
From hence, no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
Star interposed, however small he sees,
Not unconform to other shining globes,
Earth, and the garden of God, with cedars crowned
Above all hills. As when by night the glass
Of Galileo, less assured, observes
Imagined lands and regions in the moon;
Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades
Delos or Samos first appearing, kens
A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight
He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky
Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing
Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan
Winnows the buxom air; till, within soar
Of towering eagles, to all the fowls he seems
A phœnix, gazed by all as that sole bird,
When, to enshrine his reliques in the sun's
Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.
At once on the eastern cliff of Paradise
He lights, and to his proper shape returns
A seraph winged: six wings he wore, to shade
His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast
With regal ornament; the middle pair
Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
And colours dipt in Heaven; the third his feet
Shadowed from either heel with feathered mail,
Sky-tinctured grain. Like Maia's son he stood.
And shook his plumes, that Heavenly fragrance filled
The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands
Of angels under watch; and to his state,
And to his message high, in honour rise;
For on some message they guessed him bound.
Their glittering tents he passed, and now is come
Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
And flowering odours, cassia, nard, and balm;

A wilderness of sweets; for Nature here
Wantoned as in her prime, and played at will
Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet
Wild above rule or art; enormous bliss.
Him, through the spicy forest onward come,
Adam discerned, as in the door he sat
Of his cool bower, while now the mounted sun
Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm
Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs
And Eve within, due at her hour prepared
For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst
Of nectarous draughts between, from milky stream,
Berry or grape: to whom thus Adam called.
"Haste hither, Eve, and, worth thy sight, behold
Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
Comes this way moving; seems another morn
Risen on mid-noon; some great behest from heaven
To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
And what thy stores contain bring forth and pour
Abundance, fit to honour and receive
Our heavenly stranger: well we may afford
Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow
From large bestowed, where nature multiplies
Her fertile growth, and by disburdening grows
More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare."
To whom thus Eve. "Adam, earth's hallowed mould,
Of God inspired, small store will serve, where store,
All seasons, ripe for us hangs on the stalk;
Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes:
But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
Each plant and juiciest gourd, will pluck such choice
To entertain our angel guest, as he
Beholding shall confess, that here on earth
God hath dispensed his bounties as in Heaven."
So saying, with despatchful looks in haste
She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
What choice to choose for delicacy best,
What order so contrived as not to mix
Tastes, not well joined, inelegant, but bring
Taste after taste upheld with kindliest change;
Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
Whatever earth, all bearing mother, yields
In India East or West, or middle shore
In Pontus or the Punic coast, or where
Alcinous reigned, fruit of all kinds, in coat
Rough or smooth rind, or bearded husk, or shell,
She gathers, tribute large, and on the board
Heaps with unsparing hand; for drink the grape
She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths
From many a berry; and from sweet kernels press'd
She tempers dulcet creams; nor these to hold
Wants her fit vessels pure; then strews the ground
With rose and odours from the shrub unfumed.

Meanwhile our primitive great sire, to meet
His godlike guest, walks forth, without more train
Accompanied than with his own complete
Perfections; in himself was all his state,
More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits
On princes, when their rich retinue long
Of horses led, and grooms besmeared with gold,
Dazzles the crowd, and sets them all agape.
Nearer his presence Adam, though not awed,
Yet with submiss approach and reverence meek,
As to a superior nature bowing low
Thus said. "Native of Heaven, for other place
None can than Heaven such glorious shape contain;
Since, by descending from the thrones above,
Those happy places thou hast deigned a while
To want, and honour these, vouchsafe with us
Two only, who yet by sovereign gift possess
This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
To rest, and what the garden choicest bears
To sit and taste till this meridian heat
Be over and the sun more cool decline."
Whom thus the angelic virtue answered mild,
"Adam, I therefore came; nor art thou such
Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
As may not oft invite, though spirits of Heaven,
To visit thee: lead on then where thy bower
O'ershades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,
I have at will." So to the sylvan lodge
They came, that like Pomona's arbour smiled,
With flowerets decked, and fragrant smells; but Eve,
Undecked, save with herself, more lovely fair
Than wood nymph, or the fairest goddess, feigned
Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,
Stood to entertain her guest from heaven: no veil
She needed, virtue proof; no thought infirm
Altered her cheek. On whom the angel "Hail"
Bestowed, the holy salutation used
Long after to blest Mary, second Eve.
"Hail! mother of mankind, whose fruitful womb
Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons
Than with these various fruits the trees of God
Have heaped this table!" Raised of grassy turf
Their table was, and mossy seats had round,
And on her ample square from side to side
All autumn piled, though spring and autumn here
Danced hand in hand. Awhile discourse they hold:
No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began
Our Author. "Heavenly stranger, please to taste
These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom
All perfect good, unmeasured out, descends,
To us for food, and for delight hath caused
The earth to yield; unsavoury food perhaps
To spiritual natures; only this I know,
That one celestial Father gives to all."
To whom the Angel. "Therefore what he gives
(Whose praise be ever sung) to man, in part
Spiritual, may of purest spirits be found
No ingrateful food: and food alike those pure

Intelligential substances require,
As doth your rational; and both contain
Within them every lower faculty
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
For know, whatever was created, needs
To be sustained and fed; of elements
The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,
Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
Ethereal, and, as lowest, first the moon;
Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurged
Vapours not yet into her substance turned.
Nor doth the moon to nourishment exhale
From her moist continent to higher orbs
The sun, that light imparts to all, receives
From all his alimental recompense
In humid exhalations, and at even
Sups with the ocean. Though in Heaven the trees
Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
Yield nectar; though from off the boughs each morn
We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground
Covered with pearly grain: yet God hath here
Varied his bounty so with new delights,
As may compare with Heaven; and to taste
Think not I shall be nice." So down they sat,
And to their viands fell; nor seemingly
The angel, nor in mist, the common gloss
Of theologians; but with keen despatch
Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
To transubstantiate: what redounds, transpires
Through spirits with ease; nor wonder, if by fire
Of sooty coal, th' empiric alchymist
Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,
As from the mine. Meanwhile at table Eve
Ministered naked, and their flowing cups
With pleasant liquors crowned: O innocence
Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,
Then had the sons of God excuse to have been
Enamoured at that sight; but in those hearts
Love unlibidinous reigned, nor jealousy
Was understood, the injured lover's hell.
Thus when with meats and drinks they had sufficed,
Not burdened nature, sudden mind arose
In Adam, not to let th' occasion pass,
Given him by this great conference, to know
Of things above this world, and of their being
Who dwell in Heaven, whose excellence he saw
Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms,
Divine effulgence, whose high power so far
Exceeded human, and his wary speech
Thus to th' empyreal minister he framed.
"Inhabitant with God, now know I well
Thy favour, in this honour done to man,
Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsafed
To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
Food not of angels, yet accepted so,
As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
At Heaven's high feasts to have fed: yet what compare?"
To whom the winged hierarch replied:
"O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return;
If not depraved from good, created all
Such to perfection, one first matter all,
Endued with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and, in things that live, of life;
But more refined, more spirituous, and pure,
As nearer to him placed, or nearer tending
Each in their several active spheres assigned,
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
Proportioned to each kind. So from the root
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
More airy, last the bright consummate flower
Spirits odorous breathes: flowers and their fruit,
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed,
To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
To intellectual; give both life and sense,
Fancy and understanding; whence the soul
Reason receives, and reason is her being,
Discursive, or intuitive; discourse
Is oftest yours, the latter most is ours,
Differing but in degree, of kind the same.
Wonder not then, what God for you saw good
If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
To proper substance: time may come, when men
With angels may participate, and find
No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare;
And from these corporal nutriments perhaps
Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
Improved by tract of time, and winged ascend
Ethereal, as we, or may at choice
Here or in heavenly Paradises dwell;
If ye be found obedient, and retain
Unalterably firm his love entire,
Whose progeny you are. Meanwhile enjoy
Your fill what happiness this happy state
Can comprehend, incapable of more."
To whom the patriarch of mankind replied.
"O favourable spirit, propitious guest,
Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
From centre to circumference, whereon,
In contemplation of created things,
By steps we might ascend to God. But say,
What meant that caution joined, 'If ye be found
Obedient?' can we want obedience then
To him, or possibly his love desert,
Who formed us from the dust, and placed us here,
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek or apprehend?"
To whom the angel. "Son of Heaven and earth,

Attend: that thou art happy, owe to God;
That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,
That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.
This was that caution given thee; be advised.
God made thee perfect, not immutable;
And good he made thee, but to persevere
He left it in thy power; ordained thy will
By nature free, not overruled by fate
Inextricable, or strict necessity;
Our voluntary service he requires,
Not our necessitated; such with him
Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how
Can hearts, not free, be tried whether they serve
Willing or no, who will but what they must
By destiny, and can no other choose?
Myself and all the angelic host, that stand
In sight of God enthroned, our happy state
Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;
On other surety none, freely we serve,
Because we freely love, as in our will
To love or not; in this we stand or fall:
And some are fallen, to disobedience fallen,
And so from Heaven to deepest hell; O fall
From what high state of bliss into what wo!"

To whom our great progenitor. "Thy words
Attentive, and with more delighted ear,
Divine instructor, I have heard, than when
Cherubic songs by night from neighbouring hills
Aerial music send: nor knew I not
To be both will and deed created free;
Yet that we never shall forget to love
Our Maker, and obey him, whose command
Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts
Assured me, and still assure: tho' what thou tellest
Hath passed in Heaven, some doubt within me move,
But more desire to hear, if thou consent,
The full relation, which must needs be strange,
Worthy of sacred silence to be heard;
And we have yet large day, for scarce the sun
Hath finished half his journey, and scarce begins
His other half in the great zone of Heaven."

Thus Adam made request; and Raphael,
After short pause assenting, thus began.
"High matter thou enjoinest me, O prime of men,
Sad task and hard; for how shall I relate
To human sense the invisible exploits
Of warring spirits? how, without remorse,
The ruin of so many glorious once,
And perfect while they stood? how, last, unfold
The secrets of another world, perhaps
Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy good
This is dispensed; and what surmounts the reach
Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
By likening spiritual to corporeal forms,
As may express them best: though what if earth
Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein
Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?

"As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild
Reigned where these Heavens now roll, where earth now rests
Upon her centre poised: when on a day
(For time, though in eternity, applied
To motion, measures all things durable
By present, past, and future,) on such a day
As Heaven's great year brings forth, the empyreal host
Of angels, by imperial summons called,
Innumerable before the Almighty's throne
Forthwith, from all the ends of Heaven appeared
Under their hierarchs in orders bright:
Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanced,
Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear
Stream in the air, and for distinction serve
Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;
Or in their glittering tissues bear emblazed
Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
Recorded eminent. Thus, when, in orbs
Of circuit inexpressible they stood,
Orb within orb, the Father infinite,
By whom in bliss imbosomed sat the Son,
Amidst, as from a flaming mount, whose top
Brightness had made invisible, thus spake.

"Hear, all ye angels, progeny of light,
Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers,
Hear my decree, which unrevoked shall stand.
This day I have begot whom I declare
My only Son, and on this holy hill
Him have anointed, whom ye now behold
At my right hand; your Head I him appoint;
And by myself have sworn to him shall bow
All knees in Heaven, and shall confess him Lord
Under his great vicegerent reign abide
United as one individual soul,
For ever happy: him who disobeys,
Me disobeys, breaks union, and that day,
Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
Into utter darkness, deep ingulphed, his place
Ordained without redemption, without end."

"So spake the Omnipotent, and with his words
All seemed well pleased; all seemed, but were not all.
That day, as other solemn days, they spent
In song and dance about the sacred hill;
Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere
Of planets and of fixed in all her wheels
Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolved, yet regular
Then most, when most irregular they seem;
And in their motions harmony divine
So smooths her charming tones, that God's own ear
Listens delighted. Evening now approached
(For we have also our evening and our morn,
We ours for change delectable, not need;)
Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn
Desirous; all in circles as they stood,
Tables are set, and on a sudden piled
With angels' food, and rubied nectar flows

In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heaven.
On flowers reposed, and with fresh flow'rets crowned,
They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality and joy, secure
Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds
Excess, before the all-bounteous King, who showered
With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.
Now when ambrosial night, with clouds exhaled
From that high mount of God, whence light and shade
Spring both, the face of brightest Heav'n had chang'd
To grateful twilight (for night comes not there
In darker veil,) and roseate dews disposed
All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest;
Wide over all the plain, and wider far
Than all this globous earth in plain outspread
(Such are the courts of God,) the angelic throng,
Dispersed in bands and files, their camp extend
By living streams among the trees of life,
Pavilions numberless, and sudden reared,
Celestial tabernacles, where they slept
Fanned with cool winds; save those who in their course
Melodious hymns about the sovereign throne
Alternate all night long: but not so waked
Satan; so call him now, his former name
Is heard no more in Heaven; he of the first,
If not the first archangel, great in power,
In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught
With envy against the Son of God, that day
Honoured by his great Father, and proclaimed
Messiah King anointed, could not bear,
Through pride, that sight, and thought himself impaired.
Deep malice thence conceiving, and disdain
Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour
Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolved
With all his legions to dislodge, and leave
Unworshipped, unobeyed, the throne supreme,
Contemptuous, and his next subordinate
Awakening, thus to him in secret spake.
"Sleepest thou, companion dear, what sleep can close
Thy eyelids? and rememberest what decree
Of yesterday, so late hath passed the lips
Of Heaven's Almighty. Thou to me thy thoughts
Was wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart;
Both waking we were one; how then can now
Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest imposed;
New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise
In us who serve, new councils, to debate
What doubtful may ensue: more in this place
To utter is not safe. Assemble thou
Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;
Tell them that by command, ere yet dim night
Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
And all who under me their banners wave,
Homeward with flying march, where we possess
The quarters of the north; there to prepare
Fit entertainment to receive our King,
The great Messiah, and his new commands,
Who speedily through all the hierarchies
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws."
"So spake the false archangel, and infused
Bad influence into the unwary breast
Of his associate; he together calls,
Or several one by one, the regent powers,
Under him regent; tells, as he was taught,
That, the most high commanding, now ere night,
Now ere dim night had disencumbered Heaven,
The great hierarchal standard was to move:
Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound
Or taint integrity: but all obeyed
The wonted signal, and superior voice
Of their great potentate: for great indeed
His name, and high was his degree in heaven:
His countenance as the morning star that guides
The starry flock, allured them, and with lies
Drew after him the third part of Heaven's host.
Meanwhile th' Eternal eye, whose sight discerns
Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
And from within the golden lamps that burn
Nightly before him, saw without their light
Rebellion rising; saw in whom, how spread
Among the sons of morn, what multitudes
Were banded to oppose his high decree;
And, smiling, to his only Son thus said.
"Son, thou in whom my glory I behold
In full resplendence, heir of all my might,
Nearly it now concerns us to be sure
Of our omnipotence, and with what arms
We mean to hold what anciently we claim
Of deity or empire; such a foe
Is rising, who intends to erect his throne
Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north;
Nor so content, hath in his thought to try,
In battle, what our power is, or our right.
Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
With speed what force is left, and all employ
In our defence, lest unawares we lose
This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill."
To whom the Son, with calm aspect and clear
Lightning divine, ineffable, serene,
Made answer. "Mighty Father, thou thy foes
Justly hast in derision, and, secure,
Laughest at their vain designs and tumults vain
Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
Illustrates; when they see all regal power
Given to quell their pride, and in event
Know whether I be dexterous to subdue
Thy rebels, or be found the worst in Heaven.'
So spake the Son; but Satan with powers

Far was advanced on winged speed; an host
Innumerable as the stars of night,
Or stars of morning, dew drops, which the sun
Impearls on every leaf and every flower.
Regions they passed, the mighty regencies
Of seraphim, and potentates, and thrones,
In their triple degrees; regions to which
All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
Than what this garden is to all the earth,
And all the sea, from one entire globose
Stretched into longitude; which having passed,
At length into the limits of the north
They came, and Satan to his royal seat
High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
Raised on a mount, with pyramids and towers
From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold,
The palace of great Lucifer (so call
That structure in the dialect of men
Interpreted,) which not long after he,
Affecting all equality with God,
In imitation of that mount whereon
Messiah was declared in sight of heaven
The Mountain of the Congregation called:
For thither he assembled all his train,
Pretending so commanded, to consult
About the great reception of their King,
Thither to come, and with calumnious art
Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears.

"'Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers,
If these magnific titles yet remain
Not merely titular, since by decree
Another now hath to himself engrossed
All power, and us eclipsed, under the name
Of King anointed, for whom all this haste
Of midnight march, and hurried meeting here;
This only to consult how we may best,
With what may be devised of honours new,
Receive him coming, to receive from us
Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,
Too much to one, but double how endured,
To one and to his image now proclaimed?
But what if better counsels might erect
Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke?
Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend
The supple knee? ye will not, if I trust
To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves
Natives and sons of Heaven possessed before
By none, and if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free; for orders and degrees
Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
Who can in reason, then, or right, assume
Monarchy over such as live by right
His equals, if in power and splendour less,
In freedom equal? or can introduce
Law and edict on us, who without law
Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,
And look for adoration to the abuse
Of those imperial titles, which assert
Our being ordained to govern, not to serve.'

"Thus far his bold discourse without control
Had audience; when among the seraphim
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal adored
The Deity, and divine commands obeyed,
Stood up, and, in a flame of zeal severe,
The current of his fury thus opposed.

"'O argument blasphemous, false, and proud!
Words which no ear ever to hear in Heaven
Expected, least of all from thee, ingrate,
In place thyself so high above thy peers.
Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
The just decree of God, pronounced and sworn,
That to his only Son, by right endued
With regal sceptre, every soul in Heaven
Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due
Confess him rightful King? unjust, thou say'st,
Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free
And equal over equals to let reign,
One over all with unsucceeded power.
Shalt thou give law to God? shalt thou dispute
With him the points of liberty, who made
Thee what thou art, and formed the powers of Heaven
Such as he pleased, and circumscribed their being?
Yet, by experience taught, we know how good,
And of our good and of our dignity
How provident he is; how far from thought
To make us less, bent rather to exalt
Our happy state, under one head more near
United. But to grant it thee unjust,
That equal over equals monarch reign:
Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,
Or all angelic nature joined in one,
Equal to him, begotton Son? by whom,
As by his word, the mighty Father made
All things, even thee: and all the spirits of Heaven
By him created in their bright degrees,
Crowned them with glory, and to their glory named
Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers,
Essential powers; nor by his reign obscured,
But more illustrious made: since he, the head
One of our number thus reduced becomes;
His laws our laws; all honour to him done
Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,
And tempt not these: but hasten to appease
The incensed Father, and the incensed Son,
While pardon may be found, in time besought.'

"So spake the fervent angel; but his zeal
None seconded, as out of season judged,
Or singular and rash; whereat rejoiced
The apostate, and more haughty thus replied
'That we were formed then, sayest thou? and the work
Of secondary hands, by task transferred
From Father to his Son? strange point and new!
Doctrine which we would know whence learned: who saw

When this creation was? rememberest thou
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being
We know no time when we were not as now;
Know none before us, self-begot, self-raised
By our own quickening power, when fatal course
Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
Of this our native Heaven, ethereal sons.
Our puissance is our own; our own right hand
Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try
Who is our equal: then thou shalt behold
Whether by supplication we intend
Address, and to begirt the almighty throne
Beseeching or besieging. This report,
These tidings, carry to the anointed King;
And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.'

"He said, and, as the sound of waters deep,
Hoarse murmur echoed to his words applause
Through the infinite host; nor less for that
The flaming seraph, fearless though alone
Encompassed round with foes, thus answered bold.

"'O alienate from God, O spirit accursed,
Forsaken of all good! I see thy fall
Determined, and thy hapless crew involved
In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread
Both of thy crime and punishment: henceforth
No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
Of God's Messiah; those indulgent laws
Will not be now vouchsafed: other decrees
Against thee are gone forth without recall;
That golden sceptre, which thou didst reject,
Is now an iron rod to bruise and break
Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise;
Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly
These wicked tents devoted, lest the wrath
Impendent, raging into sudden flame,
Distinguish not: for soon expect to feel
His thunder on thy head, devouring fire.
Then who created thee lamenting learn,
When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know.'

"So spake the seraph Abdiel, faithful found
Among the faithless, faithful only he;
Among the innumerable false, unmoved,
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;
Nor number, nor example, with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind
Though single. From amidst them forth he passed,
Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustained
Superior, nor of violence feared aught;
And with retorted scorn his back he turned
On those proud towers to swift destruction doomed."

BOOK VI.

THE ARGUMENT.

Raphael continues to relate how Michael and Gabriel were sent forth to battle against Satan and his angels. The first fight described: Satan and his powers retire under night: he calls a council, invents devilish engines, which, in the second day's fight, put Michael and his angels to some disorder; but they at length, pulling up mountains, overwhelmed both the force and machines of Satan: yet, the tumult not so ending, God on the third day, sends Messiah his son, for whom he had reserved the glory of that victory: he, in the power of his Father, coming to the place, and causing all his legions to stand still on either side, with his chariot and thunder driving into the midst of his enemies, pursues them, unable to resist, towards the wall of Heaven; which opening, they leap down with horror and confusion into the place of punishment prepared for them in the deep: Messiah returns with triumph to his Father.

"All night the dreadless angel, unpursued,
Through Heaven's wide champaign held his way; till morn,
Waked by the circling hours, with rosy hand
Unbarred the gates of light. There is a cave
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne,
Where light and darkness in perpetual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through Heaven
Grateful vicissitudes, like day and night:
Light issues forth, and at the other door
Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour
To veil the Heaven, though darkness there might well
Seem twilight here: and now went forth the morn.
Such as in highest Heaven, arrayed in gold
Empyreal; from before her vanished night,
Shot through with orient beams; when all the plain,
Covered with thick embattled squadrons bright,
Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:
War he perceived, war in procinct, and found
Already known, what he for news had though
To have reported: gladly then he mixed
Among those friendly powers, who him received
With joy and acclamations loud, that one,
That of so many myriads fallen, yet one
Returned not lost: on to the sacred hill
They led him high applauded, and present
Before the seat supreme; from whence a voice
From midst a golden cloud thus mild was heard.

"'Servant of God, well done; well hast thou fought
The better fight, who single hast maintained
Against revolted multitudes the cause
Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms;
And for the testimony of truth hast borne
Universal reproach, far worse to bear
Than violence; for this was all thy care
To stand approved in sight of God, though worlds
Judged thee perverse: the easier conquest now
Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
Back on thy foes more glorious to return
Than scorned thou didst depart, and to subdue
By force, who reason for their law refuse,

Right reason for their law, and for their king
Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.
Go, Michael, of celestial armies prince,
And thou, in military prowess next,
Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons
Invincible; lead forth my armed saints,
By thousands and by millions, ranged for fight,
Equal in number to that godless crew
Rebellious; them with fire and hostile arms
Fearless assault; and, to the brow of Heaven
Pursuing, drive them out from God and bliss
Into their place of punishment, the gulf
Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide
His fiery Chaos to receive their fall.'

"So spake the sovereign voice, and clouds began
To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll
In dusky wreaths, reluctant flames, the sign
Of wrath awaked; nor with less dread the loud
Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow:
At which command the powers militant,
That stood for Heaven, in mighty quadrate joined
Of union irresistible, moved on
In silence their bright legions, to the sound
Of instrumental harmony, that breathed
Heroic ardour to adventurous deeds
Under their godlike leaders, in the cause
Of God and his Messiah. On they move,
Indissolubly firm, nor obvious hill,
Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream divides
Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground
Their march was, and the passive air upbore
Their nimble tread; as when the total kind
Of birds, in orderly array on wing,
Came, summoned over Eden, to receive
Their names of thee; so over many a tract
Of Heaven they marched, and many a province wide
Tenfold the length of this terrene: at last,
Far in th' horizon to the north appeared
From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretch
In battailous aspect, and nearer view
Bristled with upright beams innumerable
Of rigid spears, and helmets thronged, and shields
Various, with boastful argument portrayed,
The banded powers of Satan, hasting on
With furious exhibition; for they weened
That self-same day, by fight or by surprise
To win the mount of God, and on his throne
To set the envier of his state, the proud
Aspirer; but their thoughts proved fond and vain
In the midway: though strange to us it seemed
At first, that angel should with angel war,
And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet
So oft in festivals of joy and love
Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire,
Hymning the eternal Father: but the shout
Of battle now began, and rushing sound
Of onset ended soon each milder thought.
High in the midst, exalted as a God,
The apostate in his sunbright chariot sat,
Idol of majesty divine, enclosed
With flaming cherubim and golden shields;
Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now
'Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,
A dreadful interval, and front to front
Presented stood in terrible array
Of hideous length: before the cloudy van,
On the rough edge of battle ere it joined,
Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanced
Came towering, armed in adamant and gold;
Abdiel that sight endured not, where he stood
Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,
And thus his own undaunted heart explores.

"'O Heaven, that such resemblance of the Highest
Should yet remain, where faith and fealty
Remain not: wherefore should not strength and might
There fail where virtue fails, or weakest prove
Where boldest, though to sight unconquerable?
His puissance, trusting in th' Almighty's aid,
I mean to try, whose reason I have tried
Unsound and false; nor is it aught but just,
That he, who in debate of truth hath won,
Should win in arms, in both disputes alike
Victor; though brutish that contest and foul,
When reason hath to deal with force, yet so
Most reason is that reason overcome.'

"So pondering, and from his armed peers
Forth stepping opposite, half-way he met
His daring foe, at this prevention more
Incensed, and thus securely him defied.

"'Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reached
The height of thy aspiring unopposed,
The throne of God unguarded, and his side
Abandoned, at the terror of thy power
Or potent tongue: fool! not to think how vain
Against the Omnipotent to rise in arms;
Who out of smallest things could, without end,
Have raised incessant armies to defeat
Thy folly; or with solitary hand
Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow,
Unaided, could have finished thee, and whelmed
Thy legions under darkness: but thou seest
All are not of thy train; there be who faith
Prefer, and piety to God, though then
To thee not visible, when I alone
Seemed in thy world erroneous to dissent
From all: my sect thou seest; now learn too late
How few sometimes may know, when thousands err.'

"Whom the grand foe, with scornful eye askance,
Thus answered. 'I'll for thee, but in wished hour,
Of my revenge, first sought for, thou returnest
From flight, seditious angel! to receive
Thy merited reward, the first assay
Of this right hand provoked, since first that tongue

Inspired with contradiction, durst oppose
A third part of the Gods, in synod met
Their deities to assert, who, while they feel
Vigour divine within them, can allow
Omnipotence to none. But well thou comest
Before thy fellows, ambitious to win
From me some plume, that thy success may show
Destruction to the rest: this pause between
(Unanswered lest thou boast) to let thee know;
At first I thought that liberty and Heaven
To heavenly souls had been all one; but now
I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
Ministering spirits, trained up in feast and song!
Such hast thou armed, the minstrelsy of Heaven,
Servility with freedom to contend,
As both their deeds compared this day shall prove.'

"To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern replied,
'Apostate! still thou err'st, nor end wilt find
Of erring, from the path of truth remote:
Unjustly thou depravest it with the name
Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains,
Or nature: God and nature bid the same,
When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
To serve the unwise, or him who hath rebelled
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee,
Thyself not free, but to thyself inthralled;
Yet lewdly darest our ministering upbraid.
Reign thou in hell thy kingdom; let me serve
In Heaven God ever blest, and his divine
Behests obey, worthiest to be obeyed;
Yet chains in hell, not realms expect; meanwhile
From me returned, as erst thou saidst, from flight,
This greeting on thy impious crest receive.'

"So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell
On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield,
Such ruin intercept: ten paces huge
He back recoiled; the tenth on bended knee
His massy spear upstayed; as if on earth
Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,
Sidelong had pushed a mountain from his seat,
Half sunk with all his pines. Amazement seized
The rebel thrones, but greater rage, to see
Thus foiled their mightiest; ours joy filled, and
shout,
Presage of victory, and fierce desire
Of battle: whereat Michael bid sound
Th' archangel trumpet; through the vast of heaven
It sounded, and the faithful armies rung
Hosanna to the Highest: nor stood at gaze
The adverse legions, nor less hideous joined
The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,
And clamour such as heard in Heaven till now
Was never; arms on armour, clashing brayed
Horrible discord, and the madding wheels
Of brazen chariots raged; dire was the noise
Of conflict; over head the dismal hiss
Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,
And, flying, vaulted either host with fire.
So under fiery cope together rushed
Both battles main, with ruinous assault
And inextinguishable rage; all Heaven
Resounded, and, had earth been then, all earth
Had to her centre shook. What wonder, when
Millions of fierce encountering angels fought
On either side, the least of whom could wield
These elements, and arm him with the force
Of all their regions: how much more of power
Army against army numberless to raise
Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb,
Though not destroy, their happy native seat;
Had not the Eternal King omnipotent,
From his strong hold of Heaven, high overruled
And limited their might; though numbered such
As each divided legion might have seemed
A numerous host; in strength each armed hand
A legion; led in fight, yet leader seemed
Each warrior single as in chief, expert
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway
Of battle, open when, and when to close
The ridges of grim war: no thought of flight,
None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
That argued fear; each on himself relied,
As only in his arm the moment lay
Of victory: deeds of eternal fame
Were done, but infinite; for wide was spread
That war and various; sometimes on firm ground
A standing fight, then, soaring on main wing,
Tormented all the air; all air seemed then
Conflicting fire. Long time in even scale
The battle hung; till Satan, who that day
Prodigious power had shown, and met in arms
No equal, ranging through the dire attack
Of fighting seraphim confused, at length
Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and felled
Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed sway
Brandished aloft, the horrid edge came down
Wide wasting; such destruction to withstand
He hasted, and opposed the rocky orb
Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,
A vast circumference. At his approach
The great archangel from his warlike toil
Surceased, and glad, as hoping here to end
Intestine war in Heaven, the arch foe subdued,
Or captive dragged in chains, with hostile frown,
And visage all inflamed, first thus began.

"'Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,
Unnamed in Heaven, now plenteous as thou seest
These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,
Though heaviest by just measure on thyself
And thy adherents: how hast thou disturbed
Heaven's blessed peace, and into nature brought
Misery, uncreated till the crime
Of thy rebellion! how hast thou instilled
Thy malice into thousands, once upright
And faithful, now proved false! But think not here

To trouble holy rest; Heaven casts thee out
From all her confines: Heaven, the seat of bliss,
Brooks not the works of violence and war.
Hence then, and evil go with thee along,
Thy offspring, to the place of evil, hell;
Thou and thy wicked crew! there mingle broils,
Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,
Or some more sudden vengeance, winged from God,
Precipitate thee with augmented pain!'

"So spake the prince of angels; to whom thus
The adversary. 'Nor think thou with wind
Of airy threats to awe whom yet with deeds
Thou canst not. Hast thou turned the least of these
To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise
Unvanquished, easier to transact with me
That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats
To chase me hence? err not, that so shall end
The strife which thou callest evil, but we style
The strife of glory; which we mean to win,
Or turn this Heaven itself into the hell
Thou fablest; here however to dwell free,
If not to reign: meanwhile thy utmost force,
And join him named Almighty to thy aid,
I fly not, but have sought thee far and nigh.'

"They ended parle, and both addressed for fight
Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue
Of angels, can relate, or to what things
Liken on earth conspicuous, that may lift
Human imagination to such height
Of godlike power? for likest gods they seemed,
Stood they or moved, in stature, motion, arms,
Fit to decide the empire of great Heaven.
Now waved their fiery swords, and in the air
Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields
Blazed opposite, while expectation stood
In horror; from each hand with speed retired,
Where erst was thickest fight, the angelic throng,
And left large field, unsafe within the wind
Of such commotion; such as, to set forth
Great things by small, if, nature's concord broke,
Among the constellations war were sprung,
Two planets, rushing from aspect malign
Of fiercest opposition, in mid sky
Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound.
Together both with next to Almighty arm
Uplifted imminent, one stroke they aimed
That might determine, and not need repeat,
As not of power at once; nor odds appeared
In might or swift prevention; but the sword
Of Michael, from the armoury of God,
Was given him tempered so, that neither keen
Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite
Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor stayed,
But with swift wheel reverse, deep entering, shared
All his right side: then Satan first knew pain,
And writhed him to and fro convolved; so sore
The griding sword with discontinuous wound
Passed through him: but the ethereal substance closed,
Not long divisible; and from the gash
A stream of nectarous humour issuing flowed
Sanguine, such as celestial spirits may bleed,
And all his armour stained, erewhile so bright.
Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run
By angels many and strong, who interposed
Defence, while others bore him on their shields
Back to his chariot, where it stood retired
From off the files of war; there they him laid
Gnashing for anguish, and despite and shame,
To find himself not matchless, and his pride
Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath
His confidence to equal God in power.
Yet soon he healed; for spirits that live throughout
Vital in every part, not as frail man
In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,
Can not but by annihilating die;
Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
Receive, no more than can the fluid air:
All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,
All intellect, all sense; and as they please,
They limb themselves, and colour, shape, or size
Assume as likes them best, condense or rare.

"Meanwhile in other parts like deeds deserved
Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,
And with fierce ensigns pierced the deep array
Of Moloch, furious king; who him defied,
And at his chariot wheels to drag him bound
Threatened, nor from the Holy One of Heaven
Refrained his tongue blasphemous; but anon,
Down cloven to the waist, with shattered arms
And uncouth pain fled bellowing. On each wing
Uriel, and Raphael, his vaunting foe,
Though huge, and in a rock of diamond armed
Vanquished Adramelech and Asmadai,
Two potent thrones, that to be less than Gods
Disdained, but meaner thoughts learned in their flight,
Mangled with ghastly wounds through plate and mail.
Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy
The atheist crew, but with redoubled blow
Ariel, and Arioch, and the violence
Of Ramiel, scorched and blasted, overthrew.
I might relate of thousands, and their names
Eternize here on earth; but those elect
Angels, contented with their fame in Heaven,
Seek not the praise of men; the other sort,
In might though wondrous, and in acts of war,
Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom
Cancelled from Heaven and sacred memory
Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell.
For strength, from truth divided and from just,
Illaudable, naught merits but dispraise
And ignominy, yet to glory aspires
Vain glorious, and through infamy seeks fame:
Therefore eternal silence be their doom

"And now, their mightiest quelled, the battle swerved,
With many an inroad gored; deformed rout
Entered, and foul disorder; all the ground
With shivered armour strown, and on a heap
Chariot and charioteer lay overturned,
And fiery foaming steeds; what stood recoiled
O'er wearied, through the faint satanic host
Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surprised,
Then first with fear surprised and sense of pain,
Fled ignominious, to such evil brought
By sin of disobedience; till that hour
Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
Far otherwise the inviolable saints,
In cubic phalanx firm, advanced entire,
Invulnerable, impenetrably armed;
Such high advantages their innocence
Gave them above their foes, not to have sinned,
Not to have disobeyed; in fight they stood
Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pained
By wound, though from their place by violence moved.

"Now night her course began, and over Heaven
Inducing darkness, grateful truce imposed,
And silence on the odious din of war:
Under her cloudy covert both retired,
Victor and vanquished: on the foughten field
Michael and his angels prevalent
Encamping, placed in guard their watches round,
Cherubic waving fires: on the other part,
Satan with his rebellious disappeared,
Far in the dark dislodged; and, void of rest,
His potentates to council called by night;
And in the midst thus undismayed began.

"'O now in danger tried, now known in arms
Not to be overpowered, companions dear,
Found worthy not of liberty alone,
Too mean pretence! but, what we more affect,
Honour, dominion, glory, and renown;
Who have sustained one day in doubtful fight
(And if one day, why not eternal days?)
What Heaven's Lord had power fullest to send
Against us from about his throne, and judged
Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
But proves not so: then fallible, it seems,
Of future we may deem him, though till now
Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly armed,
Some disadvantage we endured and pain,
Till now not known, but, known, as soon contemned;
Since now we find this our empyreal form
Incapable of mortal injury,
Imperishable, and though pierced with wound,
Soon closing, and by native vigour healed.
Of evil then so small, as easy think
The remedy; perhaps more valid arms,
Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
May serve to better us, and worse our foes,
Or equal what between us made the odds,
In nature none; if other hidden cause
Left them superior, while we can preserve
Unhurt our minds and understanding sound,
Due search and consultation will disclose.'

"He sat; and in the assembly next upstood
Nisroch, of principalities the prime:
As one he stood escaped from cruel fight,
Sore toiled, his riven arms to havoc hewn,
And cloudy in aspect thus answering spake.
'Deliverer from new lords, leader to free
Enjoyment of our rights as gods; yet hard
For gods, and too unequal work we find,
Against unequal arms to fight in pain,
Against unpained, impassive; from which evil
Ruin must needs ensue; for what avails
Valour or strength, though matchless, quelled with pain
Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands
Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we may well
Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine,
But live content, which is the calmest life:
But pain is perfect misery, the worst
Of evils, and excessive, overturns
All patience. He who therefore can invent
With what more forcible we may offend
Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves
No less than for deliverance what we owe.'

"Whereto with look composed Satan replied.
'Not uninvented that, which thou aright
Believest so main to our success, I bring.
Which of us who beholds the bright surface
Of this ethereous mould whereon we stand,
This continent of spacious Heaven, adorned
With plant, fruit, flower, ambrosial, gems, and gold;
Whose eye so superficially surveys
These things as not to mind from whence they grow
Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,
Of spirituous and fiery spume, till, touched
With Heaven's ray, and tempered, they shoot forth
So beauteous, opening to the ambient light?
These in their dark nativity the deep
Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal flame;
Which into hollow engines long and round
Thick rammed, at th' other bore with touch of fire
Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth
From far, with thundering noise, among our foes
Such implements of mischief, as shall dash
To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever stands
Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarmed
The Thunderer of his only dreaded bolt.
Nor long shall be our labour; yet ere dawn,
Effect shall end our wish. Meanwhile revive;
Abandon fear; to strength and council joined
Think nothing hard, much less to be despaired.'

"He ended, and his words their drooping cheer
Enlightened, and their languished hope revived.
Th' invention all admired, and each, how he

To be the inventor missed; so easy it seemed
Once found, which, yet unfound, most would have thought
Impossible: yet, haply, of thy race
In future days, if malice should abound,
Some one, intent on mischief, or inspired
With devilish machination, might devise
Like instrument to plague the sons of men
For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.
Forthwith from council to the work they flew;
None arguing stood: innumerable hands
Were ready; in a moment up they turned
Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath
The originals of nature in their crude
Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam
They found, they mingled, and with subtle art,
Concocted and adjusted, they reduced
To blackest grain, and into store conveyed:
Part hidden veins digged up (nor hath this earth
Entrails unlike) of mineral and stone,
Whereof to found their engines and their balls
Of missive ruin; part incentive reed
Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire.
So all, ere dayspring, under conscious night,
Secret they finished, and in order set,
With silent circumspection, unespied.
"Now when fair morn orient in Heaven appeared,
Up rose the victor angels, and to arms
The matin trumpet sung: in arms they stood
Of golden panoply, refulgent host,
Soon banded; others from the dawning hills
Look round, and scouts each coast light armed scour,
Each quarter to descry the distant foe,
Where lodged, or whether fled, or if for fight,
In motion or in halt: him soon they met
Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in slow
But firm battalion; back with speediest sail
Zophiel, of cherubim the swiftest wing,
Came flying, and in mid air aloud thus cried.
"Arm, warriors, arm for fight; the foe at hand,
Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
This day; fear not his flight; so thick a cloud
He comes, and settled in his face I see
Sad resolution and secure: let each
His adamantine coat gird well, and each
Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orbed shield,
Borne ev'n or high; for this day will pour down,
If I conjecture aught, no drizzling shower,
But rattling storm of arrows barbed with fire.'
"So warned he them, aware themselves, and soon
In order quit of all impediment;
Instant without disturb they took alarm,
And onward moved embattled; when, behold!
Not distant far, with heavy pace the foe
Approaching, gross and huge, in hollow cub
Training his devilish enginery, impaled
On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,
To hide the fraud. At interview both stood
A while; but suddenly at head appeared
Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud.
"'Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold
That all may see who hate us, how we seek
Peace and composure, and with open breast
Stand ready to receive them, if they like
Our overture, and turn not back perverse:
But that I doubt; however, witness Heaven!
Heaven, witness thou anon! while we discharge
Freely our part: ye who appointed stand,
Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch
What we propound, and loud that all may hear!'
"So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce
Had ended, when to right and left the front
Divided, and to either flank retired;
Which to our eyes discovered, new and strange,
A triple mounted row of pillars laid
On wheels (for like to pillars most they seemed,
Or hollowed bodies made of oak or fir,
With branches lopt, in wood or mountain felled,)
Brass, iron, stony mould, had not their mouths
With hideous orifice gaped on us wide,
Portending hollow truce: at each behind
A seraph stood, and in his hand a reed
Stood waving tipt with fire; while we, suspense,
Collected stood within our thoughts amused,
Not long; for sudden all at once their reeds
Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied
With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,
But soon obscured with smoke, all Heaven appeared,
From those deep-throated engines belched, whose roar
Embowelled with outrageous noise the air,
And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul
Their devilish glut, chained thunderbolts and hail
Of iron globes; which on the victor host
Levelled, with such impetuous fury smote,
That whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,
Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell
By thousands, angel on archangel rolled;
The sooner for their arms; unarmed, they might
Have easily, as spirits, evaded swift
By quick contraction or remove; but now
Foul dissipation followed, and forced rout;
Nor served it to relax their serried files.
What should they do? if on they rushed, repulse
Repeated, and indecent overthrow
Doubled, would render them yet more despised,
And to their foes a laughter; for in view
Stood ranked of seraphim another row,
In posture to displode their second tire
Of thunder: back defeated to return
They worse abhorred. Satan beheld their plight,
And to his mates thus in derision called.

"'O friends! why come not on these victors proud?
Erewhile they fierce were coming; and when we
To entertain them fair with open front
And breast (what could we more?) propounded terms
Of composition, straight they changed their minds,
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
As they would dance; yet for a dance they seemed
Somewhat extravagant and wild, perhaps
For joy of offered peace: but I suppose,
If our proposals once again were heard,
We should compel them to a quick result.'

"To whom thus Belial, in like gamesome mood.
'Leader! the terms we sent were terms of weight,
Of hard contents, and full of force urged home,
Such as we might perceive amused them all,
And stumbled many: who receives them right
Had need from head to foot well understand;
Not understood, this gift they have besides,
They show us when our foes walk not upright.'

"So they among themselves in pleasant vein
Stood scoffing, heightened in their thoughts beyond
All doubt of victory: eternal might
To match with their inventions they presumed
So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
And all his host derided, while they stood
A while in trouble: but they stood not long;
Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.
Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power,
Which God hath in his mighty angels placed!)
Their arms away they threw, and to the hills
(For earth hath this variety from Heaven
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale,)
Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew;
From their foundations loosening to and fro,
They plucked the seated hills with all their load,
Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops
Uplifting bore them in their hands: amaze,
Be sure, and terror, seized the rebel host,
When coming towards them so dread they saw
The bottom of the mountains upward turned;
Till on those cursed engines' triple row
They saw them whelmed, and all their confidence
Under the weight of mountains buried deep;
Themselves invaded next, and on their heads
Main promontories flung, which in the air
Came shadowing, and oppressed whole legions armed;
Their armour helped their harm, crushed in and bruised
Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain
Implacable, and many a dolorous groan;
Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind
Out of such prison, though spirits of purest light,
Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.
The rest, in imitation, to like arms
Betook them, and the neighbouring hills uptore;
So hills amid the air encountered hills,
Hurled to and fro with jaculation dire,
That under ground they fought in dismal shade;
Infernal noise! war seemed a civil game
To this uproar; horrid confusion heaped
Upon confusion rose: and now all Heaven
Had gone to wreck, with ruin overspread,
Had not the almighty Father, where he sits
Shrined in his sanctuary of Heaven secure,
Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
This tumult, and permitted all, advised:
That his great purpose he might so fulfil,
To honour his anointed Son, avenged
Upon his enemies, and to declare
All power on him transferred: whence to his Son,
Th' assessor of his throne, he thus began.

"'Effulgence of my glory, Son beloved,
Son, in whose face invisible is beheld,
Visibly, what by deity I am,
And in whose hand what by decree I do,
Second Omnipotence! two days are past,
Two days, as we compute the days of Heaven,
Since Michael and his powers went forth to tame
These disobedient: sore hath been their fight,
As likeliest was, when two such foes met armed;
For to themselves I left them, and thou knowest,
Equal in their creation they were formed,
Save what sin hath impaired, which yet hath wrought
Insensibly, for I suspend their doom;
Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
Endless, and no solution will be found:
War wearied hath performed what war can do,
And to disordered rage let loose the reins,
With mountains and with weapons armed, which makes
Wild work in Heaven, and dangerous to the main.
Two days are therefore past, the third is thine;
For thee I have ordained it, and thus far
Have suffered, that the glory may be thine
Of ending this great war, since none but Thou
Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
Immense I have transfused, that all may know
In Heaven and hell thy power above compare;
And, this perverse commotion governed thus,
To manifest thee worthiest to be heir
Of all things; to be Heir and to be King
By sacred unction, by deserved right.
Go then, thou mightiest, in thy Father's might,
Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
That shake Heaven's basis, bring forth all my war
My bow and thunder, my almighty arms
Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh;
Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out
From all Heaven's bounds into the upper deep.
There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
God, and Messiah his anointed King.'

" He said, and on his Son with rays direct
Shone full; he all his Father full expressed
Ineffably into his face received;
And thus the filial Godhead answering spake.
" 'O Father, O Supreme of Heavenly thrones,
First, highest, holiest, best, thou always seekest
To glorify thy Son, I always thee,
As is most just; this I my glory account,
My exaltation, and my whole delight,
That thou, in me well pleased, declarest thy will
Fulfilled, which to fulfil is all my bliss.
Sceptre and power, thy giving, I assume,
And gladlier shall resign, when in the end
Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee
For ever, and in me all whom thou lovest;
But whom thou hatest, I hate, and can put on
Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,
Image of thee in all things; and shall soon,
Armed with thy might, rid Heaven of these rebelled,
To their prepared ill mansion driven down,
To chains of darkness, and th' undying worm,
That from thy just obedience could revolt,
Whom to obey is happiness entire.
Then shall thy saints unmixed, and from th' impure
Far separate, circling thy holy mount,
Unfeigned hallelujahs to thee sing,
Hymns of high praise, and I among them Chief.'
" So said, he, o'er his sceptre bowing, rose
From the right hand of glory where he sat;
And the third sacred morn began to shine,
Dawning through Heaven: forth rushed with whirlwind sound
The chariot of paternal Deity,
Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
Itself instinct with spirit, but convoyed
By four cherubic shapes; four faces each
Had wondrous; as with stars, their bodies all
And wings were set with eyes, with eyes the wheels
Of berryl, and careering fires between;
Over their heads a crystal firmament,
Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with pure
Amber, and colours of the showery arch.
He, in celestial panoply all armed
Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
Ascended; at his right hand Victory
Sat eagle-winged; beside him hung his bow
And quiver with three-bolted thunder stored,
And from about him fierce effusion rolled
Of smoke, and bickering flame, and sparkles dire:
Attended with ten thousand thousand saints,
He onward came, far off his coming shone;
And twenty thousand (I their number heard)
Chariots of God, half on each hand, were seen:
He on the wings of cherub rode sublime
On the crystalline sky, in sapphire throned,
Illustrious far and wide, but by his own
First seen: them unexpected joy surprised,
When the great ensign of Messiah blazed
Aloft by angels borne, his sign in Heaven;
Under whose conduct Michael soon reduced
His army, circumfused on either wing,
Under their Head embodied all in one.
Before him power divine his way prepared;
At his command th' uprooted hills retired
Each to his place, they heard his voice, and went
Obsequious; Heaven his wonted face renewed,
And with fresh flowerets hill and valley smiled.
This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdured,
And to rebellious fight rallied their powers,
Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.
In heavenly spirits could such perverseness dwell?
But to convince the proud what signs avail,
Or wonders move th' obdurate to relent?
They, hardened more by what might most reclaim,
Grieving to see his glory, at the sight
Took envy; and, aspiring to his height,
Stood re-embattled fierce, by force, or fraud
Weening to prosper, and at length prevail
Against God and Messiah, or to fall
In universal ruin last; and now
To final battle drew, disdaining flight,
Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
To all his host on either hand thus spake.
" 'Stand still in bright array, ye saints, here stand,
Ye angels armed, this day from battle rest;
Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause;
And as ye have received, so have ye done
Invincibly; but of this cursed crew
The punishment to other hand belongs;
Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints:
Number to this day's work is not ordained,
Nor multitude; stand only, and behold
God's indignation on these godless poured
By me; not you, but me, they have despised,
Yet envied; against me is all their rage,
Because the Father, to whom in Heaven supreme
Kingdom, and power, and glory appertains,
Hath honoured me according to his will.
Therefore to me their doom he hath assigned
That they may have their wish, to try with me
In battle which the stronger proves; they all,
Or I alone against them; since by strength
They measure all, of other excellence
Not emulous, nor care who them excels;
Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.'
" So spake the Son, and into terror changed
His countenance, too severe to be beheld.
And full of wrath bent on his enemies.
At once the four spread out their starry wings
With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
Of his fierce chariot rolled, as with the sound
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host.

He on his impious foes right onward drove,
Gloomy as night; under his burning wheels
The steadfast empyrean shook throughout,
All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
Among them he arrived, in his right hand
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
Before him, such as in their souls infixed
Plagues: they, astonished, all resistance lost,
All courage; down their idle weapons drop;
O'er shields, and helms, and helmed heads he rode
Of thrones and mighty seraphim prostrate,
That wished the mountains now might be again
Thrown on them, as a shelter from his ire.
Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
His arrows, from the four-fold visaged four
Distinct with eyes; and from the living wheels
Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;
One spirit in them ruled, and every eye
Glared lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
Among th' accursed, that withered all their strength,
And of their wonted vigour left them drained,
Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen.
Yet half his strength he put not forth, but checked
His thunder in mid volley; for he meant
Not to destroy, but root them out of Heaven:
The overthrown he raised, and, as a herd
Of goats or tim'rous flock together thronged,
Drove them before him thunderstruck, pursued
With terrors, and with furies, to the bounds
And crystal wall of Heaven, which, opening wide,
Rolled inward, and a spacious gap disclosed
Into the wasteful deep: the monstrous sight
Struck them with horror backward, but far worse
Urged them behind: headlong themselves they threw
Down from the verge of Heaven; eternal wrath
Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.
Hell heard the unsufferable noise, hell saw
Heaven running from Heaven, and would have fled
Affrighted; but strict fate had cast too deep
Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound.
Nine days they fell: confounded Chaos roared,
And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
Encumbered him with ruin; hell at last
Yawning received them whole, and on them closed;
Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire
Unquenchable, the house of wo and pain.
Disburdened Heaven rejoiced, and soon repaired
Her mural breach, returning whence it rolled.
Sole victor, from the expulsion of his foes
Messiah his triumphal chariot turned:
To meet him all his saints, who silent stood
Eyewitnesses of his almighty acts,
With jubilee advanced; and, as they went,
Shaded with branching palm, each order bright
Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,
Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion given,
Worthiest to reign: he, celebrated, rode
Triumphant through mid Heaven, into the courts
And temple of his mighty Father throned
On high; who into glory him received,
Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.
"Thus, measuring things in Heaven by things on earth,
At thy request, and that thou may'st beware
By what is past, to thee I have revealed
What might have else to human race been hid;
The discord which befell, and war in Heaven
Among the angelic powers, and the deep fall
Of those too high aspiring, who rebelled
With Satan; he who envies now thy state,
Who now is plotting how he may seduce
Thee also from obedience, that with him
Bereaved of happiness, thou may'st partake
His punishment, eternal misery;
Which would be all his solace and revenge,
As a despite done against the most High,
Thee once to gain companion of his wo.
But listen not to his temptations, warn
Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard,
By terrible example, the reward
Of disobedience; firm they might have stood,
Yet fell; remember, and fear to transgress."

BOOK VII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Raphael, at the request of Adam, relates how and wherefore this world was first created; that God, after the expelling of Satan and his angels out of Heaven, declared his pleasure to create another world, and other creatures to dwell therein; sends his Son with glory, and attendance of angels, to perform the work of creation in six days; the angels celebrate with hymns the performance thereof, and his reascension into Heaven.

Descend from Heaven, Urania, by that name
If rightly thou art called, whose voice divine
Following, above the Olympian hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegasean wing,
The meaning, not the name I call: for thou
Nor of the muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwellest, but, heavenly-born,
Before the hills appeared, or fountain flowed,
Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
In presence of the Almighty Father, pleased
With thy celestial song. Up led by thee
Into the Heaven of Heavens I have presumed,
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
Thy tempering: with like safety, guided down
Return me to my native element:
Lest from this flying steed unreined (as once
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime,)
Dismounted, on the Aleian field I fall

Erroneous there to wander, and forlorn.
Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
Within the visible diurnal sphere;
Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
More safe I sing, with mortal voice unchanged
To hoarse or mute, though fallen on evil days,
On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues;
In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,
And solitude; yet not alone, while thou
Visitest my slumbers nightly, or when morn
Purples the east; still govern thou my song,
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears
To rapture, till the savage clamour drowned
Both harp and voice; nor could the muse defend
Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores:
For thou art heavenly, she an empty dream.

Say, goddess, what ensued when Raphael
The affable archangel, had forewarned
Adam, by dire example, to beware
Apostacy, by what befell in Heaven
To those apostates, lest the like befall
In Paradise, to Adam or his race,
Charged not to touch the interdicted tree,
If they transgress and slight that sole command,
So easily obeyed amid the choice,
Of all tastes else to please their appetite,
Though wandering. He with his consorted Eve
The story heard attentive, and was filled
With admiration and deep muse, to hear
Of things so high and strange, things to their thought
So unimaginable as hate in Heaven,
And war so near the peace of God in bliss,
With such confusion: but the evil, soon
Driven back, redounded as a flood on those
From whom it sprung, impossible to mix
With blessedness. Whence Adam soon revealed
The doubts that in his heart arose: and now
Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know
What nearer might concern him; how this world
Of Heaven and earth conspicuous, first began;
When, and whereof created; for what cause;
What within Eden, or without, was done
Before his memory; as one whose drought,
Yet scarce allayed, still eyes the current stream,
Whose liquid murmur heard, new thirst excites,
Proceeded thus to ask his heavenly guest.

"Great things, and full of wonder in our ears,
Far differing from this world, thou hast revealed,
Divine interpreter! by favour sent
Down from the empyrean, to forewarn
Us timely, of what might else have been our loss,
Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach.
For which to the infinitely good we owe
Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
Receive, with solemn purpose to observe
Immutably his sovereign will, the end
Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsafed
Gently, for our instruction, to impart
Things above earthly thought, which yet concerned
Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seemed,
Deign to descend now lower, and relate
What may no less, perhaps, avail us, known;
How first began this Heaven which we behold
Distant so high, with moving fires adorned
Innumerable; and this which yields or fills
All space, the ambient air wide interfused,
Embracing round this florid earth; what cause
Moved the Creator, in his holy rest
Through all eternity, so late to build
In Chaos, and the work begun, how soon
Absolved; if unforbid thou mayest unfold
What we, not to explore the secrets, ask
Of his eternal empire, but the more
To magnify his works, the more we know.
And the great light of day yet wants to run
Much of his race, though steep; suspense in Heaven,
Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears,
And longer will delay to hear thee tell
His generation, and the rising birth
Of nature from the unapparent deep:
Or if the star of evening and the moon
Haste to thy audience, night with her will bring
Silence; and sleep, listening to thee, will watch
Or we can bid his absence, till thy song
End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine."

Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought:
And thus the godlike angel answered mild.

"This also thy request, with caution asked
Obtain: though to recount almighty works,
What words or tongue of seraph can suffice,
Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?
Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve
To glorify the Maker, and infer
Thee also happier, shall not be withheld
Thy hearing; such commission from above
I have received, to answer thy desire
Of knowledge within bounds; beyond, abstain
To ask, nor let thine own inventions hope
Things not revealed, which th' invisible King,
Only omniscient, hath suppressed in night,
To none communicable in earth or Heaven:
Enough is left besides to search and know.
But knowledge is as food, and needs no less
Her temperance over appetite, to know
In measure what the mind may well contain;
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.

"Know then, that, after Lucifer from Heaven
(So call him, brighter once amidst the host
Of angels, than that star the stars among)
Fell with his flaming legions through the deep

Into his place, and the great Son returned
Victorious with his saints, the omnipotent,
Eternal Father, from his throne beheld
Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake.
"At least our envious foe hath failed, who thought
All like himself rebellious, by whose aid
This inaccessible high strength, the seat
Of Deity supreme, us dispossessed,
He trusted to have seized, and into fraud
Drew many, whom their place knows here no more;
Yet far the greater part have kept, I see,
Their station; Heaven, yet populous, retains
Number sufficient to possess her realms,
Though wide, and his highest temple to frequent
With ministeries due, and solemn rites:
But, lest his heart exalt him in the harm
Already done, to have dispeopled Heaven,
My damage fondly deemed, I can repair
That detriment, if such it be to lose
Self-lost, and in a moment will create
Another world, out of one man a race
Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
Not here, till, by degrees of merit raised,
They open to themselves at length the way
Up hither, under long obedience tried,
And earth be changed to Heaven, and Heaven to earth;
One kingdom, joy and union without end.
Meanwhile inhabit lax, ye powers of Heaven;
And thou my Word, begotten Son, by thee
This I perform; speak thou, and be it done!
My overshadowing spirit and might with thee
I send along; ride forth, and bid the deep
Within appointed bounds be Heaven and earth,
Boundless the deep, because I AM who fill
Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.
Though I, uncircumscribed myself, retire,
And put not forth my goodness, which is free
To act or not, necessity and chance
Approach not me, and what I will is fate.'
"So spake the Almighty, and to what he spake
His Word, the filial Godhead, gave effect.
Immediate are the acts of God, more swift
Than time or motion, but to human ears
Can not without process of speech be told,
So told as earthly notion can receive.
Great triumph and rejoicing was in Heaven,
When such was heard declared the Almighty's will;
Glory they sung to the Most High, good will
To future men, and in their dwellings peace:
Glory to him, whose just avenging ire
Had driven out the ungodly from his sight
And the habitations of the just: to him
Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordained
Good out of evil to create; instead
Of spirits malign, a better race to bring
Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse
His good to worlds and ages infinite.
"So sang the hierarchies: meanwhile the Son
On his great expedition now appeared,
Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crowned
Of majesty divine; sapience and love
Immense, and all his Father in him shone.
About his chariot numberless were poured
Cherub and seraph, potentates and thrones,
And virtues, winged spirits, and chariots winged
From the armoury of God, where stand of old
Myriads, between two brazen mountains lodged
Against a solemn day, harnessed at hand,
Celestial equipage; and now came forth
Spontaneous, for within them spirit lived,
Attendant on their Lord: Heaven opened wide
Her ever during gates, harmonious sound,
On golden hinges moving, to let forth
The King of Glory, in his powerful Word
And spirit, coming to create new worlds.
On heavenly ground they stood: and from the shore
They viewed the vast immeasurable abyss
Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
Up from the bottom turned by furious winds
And surging waves, as mountains, to assault
Heaven's height, and with the centre mix the pole.
"'Silence, ye troubled waves, and thou deep peace,'
Said then the omnific Word, 'your discord end!'
Nor stayed, but, on the wings of cherubim
Uplifted, in paternal glory rode
Far into Chaos, and the world unborn;
For Chaos heard his voice: him all his train
Followed in bright procession, to behold
Creation, and the wonders of his might.
Then stayed the fervid wheels, and in his hand
He took the golden compasses, prepared
In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
This universe, and all created things:
One foot he centered, and the other turned
Round through the vast profundity obscure,
And said, 'Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
This be thy just circumference, O world!'
Thus God the Heaven created, thus the earth,
Matter unformed and void: darkness profound
Covered the abyss; but on the watery calm
His brooding wings the spirit of God outspread,
And vital virtue infused, and vital warmth
Throughout the fluid mass, but downward purged
The black, tartareous, cold, infernal dregs,
Adverse to life: then founded, then conglobed
Like things to like, the rest to several place
Disparted, and between spun out the air;
And earth, self-balanced, on her centre hung
"'Let there be light,' said God; and forthwith light
Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,
Sprung from the deep, and, from her native east,

To journey through the aery gloom began,
Sphered in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun
Was not; she in a cloudy tabernacle
Sojourned the while. God saw the light was good;
And light from darkness, by the hemisphere,
Divided: light the day, and darkness night,
He named. Thus was the first day even and morn:
Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung
By the celestial choirs, when orient light
Exhaling first from darkness they beheld;
Birthday of Heaven and earth; with joy and shout
The hollow universal orb they filled,
And touched their golden harps, and, hymning, praised
God and his works; Creator him they sung,
Both when first evening was, and when first morn.
"Again, God said, 'Let there be firmament
Amid the waters, and let it divide
The waters from the waters:' and God made
The firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,
Transparent, elemental air, diffused
In circuit to the uttermost convex
Of this great round; partition firm and sure,
The waters underneath from those above
Dividing: for as earth, so he the world
Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide
Crystalline ocean, and the loud misrule
Of Chaos far removed; lest fierce extremes
Contiguous might distemper the whole frame:
And Heaven he named the firmament: so even
And morning chorus sung the second day.
"The earth was formed, but in the womb as yet
Of waters, embryon immature involved,
Appeared not: over all the face of earth
Main ocean flowed, not idle, but with warm
Prolific humour softening all her globe,
Fermented the great mother to conceive,
Satiate with genial moisture; when God said,
'Be gathered now ye waters under Heaven
Into one place, and let dry land appear.'
Immediately, the mountains huge appear
Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
Into the clouds; their tops ascend the sky:
So high as heaved the tumid hills, so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,
Capacious bed of waters: thither they
Hasted with glad precipitance, uprolled,
As drops on dust conglobing from the dry;
Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
For haste; such flight the great command impressed
On the swift floods: as armies at the call
Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast heard)
Troop to their standard, so the watery throng,
Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,
If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,
Soft-ebbing; nor withstood them rock or hill;
But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
With serpent error wandering, found their way,
And on the washy ooze deep channels wore;
Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
All but within those banks, where rivers now
Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
The dry land, earth; and the great receptacle
Of congregated waters, he called seas:
And saw that it was good; and said, 'Let the earth
Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed,
And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,
Whose seed is in herself upon the earth.'
He scarce had said, when the bare earth, till then
Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorned,
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad
Her universal face with pleasant green:
Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flowered
Opening their various colours, and made gay
Her bosom, smelling sweet; and, these scarce blown,
Forth flourished thick the clustering vine, forth crept
The smelling gourd, up stood the corny reed
Embattled in her field, and the humble shrub,
And bush with frizzled hair implicit: last
Rose as in dance, the stately trees, and spread
Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gem'd
Their blossoms: with high woods the hills were crowned;
With tufts the valleys, and each fountain side,
With borders long the rivers: that earth now
Seemed like to Heaven, a seat where gods might dwell,
Or wander with delight, and love to haunt
Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rained
Upon the earth, and man to till the ground
None was; but from the earth a dewy mist
Went up, and watered all the ground, and each
Plant of the field, which, ere it was in the earth,
God made, and every herb, before it grew
On the green stem; God saw that it was good:
So even and morn recorded the third day.
"Again th' Almighty spake, 'Let there be lights
High in the expanse of Heaven, to divide
The day from night; and let them be for signs,
For seasons, and for days, and circling years;
And let them be for lights, as I ordain
Their office in the firmament of Heaven,
To give light on the earth;' and it was so.
And God made two great lights, great for their use
To man, the greater to have rule by day,
The less by night, altern; and made the stars,
And set them in the firmament of Heaven
To illuminate the earth and rule the day
In their vicissitude, and rule the night,
And light from darkness to divide. God saw,
Surveying his great work, that it was good:
For, of celestial bodies, first the sun

A mighty sphere he framed, unlightsome first,
Though of ethereal mould; then formed the moon
Globose, and every magnitude of stars,
And sowed with stars the Heaven, thick as a field:
Of light by far the greater part he took,
Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and placed
In the sun's orb, made porous to receive
And drink the liquid light, firm to retain
Her gathered beams, great palace now of light.
Hither, as to their fountain, other stars
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light,
And hence the morning planets gilds her horns;
By tincture or reflection they augment
Their small peculiar, though from human sight
So far remote, with diminution seen.
First in his east the glorious lamp was seen,
Regent of day, and all the horizon round
Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
His longitude through Heaven's high road; the gray
Dawn, and the Pleiades, before him danced,
Shedding sweet influence: less bright the moon,
But opposite in levelled west was set,
His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
From him; for other light she needed none
In that aspect, and still that distance keeps
Till night; then in the east her turn she shines,
Revolved on Heaven's great axle, and her reign
With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,
With thousand thousand stars, that then appeared
Spangling the hemisphere: then, first adorned
With their bright luminaries that set and rose,
Glad evening and glad morn crowned the fourth day.

"And God said, 'Let the waters generate
Reptile with spawn abundant, living soul:
And let fowl fly above the earth, with wings
Displayed on the open firmament of Heaven.'
And God created the great whales, and each
Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously
The waters generated by their kinds,
And every bird of wing after his kind;
And saw that it was good, and blessed them, saying,
'Be fruitful, multiply, and in the seas,
And lakes, and running streams, the waters fill;
And let the fowl be multiplied on the earth.'
Forthwith the sounds and seas, each creek and bay,
With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals
Of fish, that with their fins and shining scales
Glide under the green wave, in sculls that oft
Bank the mid sea: part single, or with mate,
Graze the sea weed, their pasture, and through groves
Of coral stray, or, sporting with quick glance,
Show to the sun their waved coats dropt with gold;
Or, in their pearly shells at ease, attend
Moist nutriment; or under rocks their food
In jointed armour watch: on smooth the seal,
And bended dolphins play: part huge of bulk
Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,
Tempest the ocean: there leviathan,
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep
Stretched like a promontory, sleeps or swims,
And seems a moving land, and at his gills
Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out, a sea.
Meanwhile the tepid caves, and fens, and shores,
Their brood as numerous hatch, from the egg that soon
Bursting with kindly rupture, forth disclosed
Their callow young; but, feathered soon and fledged,
They summed their pens, and, soaring th' air sublime,
With clang despised the ground, under a cloud
In prospect; there the eagle and the stork
On cliffs and cedar tops their eyries build:
Part loosely wing the region, part more wise
In common, ranged in figure, wedge their way,
Intelligent of seasons, and set forth
Their aery caravan, high over seas
Flying, and over lands, with mutual wing
Easing their flight: so steers the prudent crane
Her annual voyage, borne on winds; the air
Floats as they pass, fann'd with unnumbered plumes:
From branch to branch the smaller birds with song
Solaced the woods, and spread their painted wings
Till even, nor then the solemn nightingale
Ceased warbling, but all night tuned her soft lays:
Others on silver lakes and rivers bathed
Their downy breast; the swan with arched neck,
Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows
Her state with oary feet; yet oft they quit
The dank, and, rising on stiff penons, tower
The mid aërial sky: others on ground
Walk'd firm; the crested cock, whose clarion sounds
The silent hours, and the other whose gay train
Adorns him, coloured with the florid hue
Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus
With fish replenished, and the air with fowl,
Evening and morn solemnized the fifth day.

"The sixth, and of creation last, arose
With evening harps and matin, when God said,
'Let the earth bring forth soul living in her kind
Cattle, and creeping things, and beasts of the earth,
Each in their kind.' The earth obeyed, and straight,
Opening her fertile womb, teemed at a birth
Innumerous living creatures, perfect forms,
Limbed and full grown; out of the ground up rose,
As from his lair, the wild beast where he wons
In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den;
Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walked:
The cattle in the fields and meadows green;
Those rare and solitary, these in flocks

Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upsprung.
The grassy clods now calved; now half appeared
The tawny lion, pawing to get free
His hinder parts, then springs as broke from bonds,
And rampant shakes his brinded mane; the ounce,
The libbard, and the tiger, as the mole
Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw
In hillocks: the swift stag from under ground,
Bore up his branching head: scarce from his mould
Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheaved
His vastness: fleeced the flocks and bleating rose,
As plants: ambiguous between sea and land
The river horse and scaly crocodile.
At once came forth whatever creeps the ground,
Insect or worm: those waved their limber fans
For wings and smallest lineaments exact,
In all the liveries decked of summer's pride,
With spots of gold and purple, azure and green:
These, as a line, their long dimension drew,
Streaking the ground with sinuous trace; not all
Minims of nature; some of serpent kind,
Wondrous in length and corpulence, involved
Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept
The parsimonious emmet, provident
Of future, in small room large heart enclosed,
Pattern of just equality, perhaps,
Hereafter, joined in her popular tribes
Of commonalty: swarming next appeared
The female bee, that feeds her husband drone
Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
With honey stored; the rest are numberless,
And thou their natures know'st, and gav'st them names,
Needless to thee repeated: not unknown
The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field,
Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes
And hairy mane terrific, though to thee
Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.

"Now Heaven in all her glory shone, and rolled
Her motions, as the great first Mover's hand
First wheeled their course: earth in her rich attire
Consummate lovely smiled; air, water, earth,
By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walked
Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remained:
There wanted yet the master work, the end
Of all yet done; a creature, who, not prone
And brute as other creatures, but endued
With sanctity of reason, might erect
His stature, and, upright, with front serene,
Govern the rest, self-knowing, and from thence
Magnanimous to correspond with Heaven,
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
Descends, thither with heart, and voice, and eyes,
Directed in devotion, to adore
And worship God supreme, who made him chief
Of all his works: therefore th' Omnipotent,
Eternal Father, (for where is not he
Present?) thus to his Son audibly spake.

"'Let us make now man in our image, man
In our similitude, and let them rule
Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,
Beast of the field, and over all the earth,
And every creeping thing that creeps the ground.'
This said, he formed thee, Adam, thee, O man,
Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breathed
The breath of life; in his own image he
Created thee, in the image of God
Express, and thou becam'st a living soul.
Male he created thee, but thy consort
Female, for race; then blessed mankind, and said,
'Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth.
Subdue it, and, throughout, dominion hold
Over fish of the sea, and fowl of the air,
And every living thing that moves on the earth.'
Wherever thus created, for no place
Is yet distinct by name, thence, as thou know'st,
He brought thee into this delicious grove,
This garden, planted with the trees of God,
Delectable both to behold and taste:
And freely all their pleasant fruit for food
Gave thee; all sorts are here that all the earth yields,
Variety without end; but of the tree,
Which, tasted, works knowledge of good and evil,
Thou may'st not; in the day thou eat'st, thou diest:
Death is the penalty imposed; beware,
And govern well thy appetite, lest Sin
Surprise thee, and her black attendant, Death.

"Here finished he, and all that he had made
Viewed, and behold all was entirely good;
So even and morn accomplished the sixth day:
Yet not till the Creator from his work
Desisted, though unwearied, up returned,
Up to the Heaven of heavens, his high abode,
Thence to behold this new created world,
The addition of his empire, how it showed
In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
Answering his great idea. Up he rode,
Followed with acclamation, and the sound
Symphonious of ten thousand harps, that tuned
Angelic harmonies: the earth, the air
Resounded, (thou remember'st, for thou heard'st,)
The Heavens and all the constellations rung,
The planets in their stations listening stood,
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.
Open, ye everlasting gates! they sung.
Open, ye Heavens! your living doors; let in
The great Creator from his work returned
Magnificent, his six days' work, a world;
Open and henceforth oft; for God will deign
To visit oft the dwellings of just men,
Delighted; and with frequent intercourse
Thither will send his winged messengers
On errands of supernal grace. So sung
The glorious train ascending; he through Heaven

That opened wide her blazing portals, led
To God's eternal house direct the way;
A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold
And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,
Seen in the galaxy, that milky way,
Which nightly as a circling zone thou seest
Powdered with stars. And now on earth the seventh
Evening arose in Eden, for the sun
Was set, and twilight from the east came on,
Forerunning night; when at the holy mount
Of Heaven's high seated top, th' imperial throne
Of Godhead fixed for ever firm and sure,
The filial power arrived, and sat him down
With his great Father: for he also went
Invisible, yet stayed (such privilege
Hath omnipresence,) and the work ordained,
Author and end of all things; and, from work
Now resting, blessed and hallowed the seventh day,
As resting on that day from all his work,
But not in silence holy kept: the harp
Had work, and rested not; the solemn pipe
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,
All sounds on fret by string or golden wire,
Tempered soft tunings, intermixed with voice
Choral or unison: of incense clouds,
Fuming from golden censers, hid the mount.
Creation and the six days' acts they sung:
Great are thy works, Jehovah, infinite
Thy power! what thought can measure thee or tongue
Relate thee! greater now in thy return
Than from the giant angels: thee that day
Thy thunders magnified; but to create
Is greater than created to destroy.
Who can impair thee, mighty King, or bound
Thy empire? easily the proud attempt
Of spirits apostate, and their counsels vain,
Thou hast repelled, while impiously they thought
Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks
To lessen thee, against his purpose serves
To manifest the more thy might: his evil
Thou usest, and from thence createst more good.
Witness this new made world, another Heaven
From Heaven gate not far, founded in view
On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea;
Of amplitude almost immense, with stars
Numerous, and every star perhaps a world
Of destined habitation; but thou knowest
Their seasons: among these the seat of men,
Earth, with her nether ocean circumfused,
Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy men,
And sons of men, whom God hath thus advanced!
Created in his image, there to dwell
And worship him, and in reward to rule
Over his works on earth, in sea, or air,
And multiply a race of worshippers
Holy and just: thrice happy, if they know
Their happiness, and persevere upright!
" So sung they, and the empyrean rung
With hallelujahs: thus was sabbath kept.
And thy request think now fulfilled, that asked
How first this world and face of things began,
And what before thy memory was done
From the beginning; that posterity,
Informed by thee, might know: if else thou seekest
Aught, not surpassing human measure, say."

BOOK VIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Adam inquires concerning celestial motions; is doubtfully answered, and exhorted to search rather things more worthy of knowledge; Adam assents; and, still desirous to detain Raphael, relates to him what he remembered since his own creation; his placing in Paradise; his talk with God concerning solitude and fit society; his first meeting and nuptials with Eve; his discourse with the angel thereupon; who, after admonitions repeated, departs.

The angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice, that he a while
Thought him still speaking, still stood fixed to hear;
Then, as new waked, thus gratefully replied.
" What thanks sufficient, or what recompense
Equal have I to render thee, divine
Historian, who thus largely hast allayed
The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsafed
This friendly condescension to relate
Things, else by me unsearchable, now heard
With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,
With glory attributed to the high
Creator? something yet of doubt remains,
Which only thy solution can resolve.
When I behold this goodly frame, this world,
Of Heaven and earth consisting, and compute
Their magnitudes; this earth, a spot, a grain,
An atom, with the firmament compared
And all her numbered stars, that seem to roll
Spaces incomprehensible (for such
Their distance argues, and their swift return
Diurnal) merely to officiate light
Round this opacous earth, this punctual spot,
One day and night, in all their vast survey
Useless besides; reasoning, I oft admire
How nature, wise and frugal, could commit
Such disproportions, with superfluous hand
So many noble bodies to create,
Greater so manifold, to this one use,
For aught appears, and on their orbs impose
Such restless revolution, day by day
Repeated; while the sedentary earth,
That better might with far less compass move,

Served by more noble than herself, attains
Her end without least motion, and receives,
As tribute, such a sumless journey brought
Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light;
Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails."
So spake our sire, and by his countenance seemed
Entering on studious thoughts abstruse; which Eve
Perceiving, where she sat retired in sight,
With lowliness majestic from her seat,
And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flowers,
To visit how they prospered, bud and bloom,
Her nursery; they at her coming sprung,
And, touched by her fair tendance, gladlier grew.
Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
Delighted, or not capable her ear
Of what was high: such pleasure she reserved,
Adam relating, she sole auditress;
Her husband the relator she preferred
Before the angel, and of him to ask
Chose rather; he, she knew, would intermix
Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute
With conjugal caresses; from his lip
Not words alone pleased her. O who meet now
Such pairs, in love and mutual honour joined?
With goddess-like demeanour forth she went,
Not unattended, for on her, as queen,
A pomp of winning graces waited still,
And from about her shot darts of desire
Into all eyes, to wish her still in sight.
And Raphael now, to Adam's doubt proposed,
Benevolent and facile thus replied.
"To ask or search I blame thee not; for Heaven
Is as the book of God before thee set,
Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn
His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years:
This to attain, whether Heaven move or earth,
Imports not, if thou reckon right; the rest
From man or angel the great Architect
Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
His secrets to be scanned by them who ought
Rather admire; or, if they list to try
Conjecture, he his fabric of the Heavens
Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move
His laughter at their quaint opinions wide
Hereafter, when they come to model Heaven
And calculate the stars, how they will wield
The mighty frame, how build, unbuild, contrive
To save appearances, how gird the sphere
With centric and eccentric scribbled o'er,
Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb:
Already by thy reasoning this I guess,
Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposest
That bodies bright and greater should not serve
The less not bright, nor Heaven such journeys run,
Earth sitting still, when she alone receives
The benefit: consider first, that great
Or bright infers not excellence: the earth,
Though, in comparison of Heaven, so small,
Nor glistering, may of solid good contain
More plenty than the sun that barren shines,
Whose virtue on itself works no effect,
But in the fruitful earth; there first received,
His beams, unactive else, their vigour find.
Yet not to earth are those bright luminaries
Officious, but to thee, earth's habitant.
And for the Heaven's wide circuit, let it speak
The Maker's high magnificence, who built
So spacious, and his line stretched out so far;
That man may know he dwells not in his own;
An edifice too large for him to fill,
Lodged in a small partition, and the rest
Ordained for uses to his Lord best known.
The swiftness of those circles attribute,
Though numberless, to his omnipotence,
That to corporeal substances could add
Speed almost spiritual: me thou thinkest not slow
Who since the morning hour set out from Heaven
Where God resides, and ere mid-day arrived
In Eden, distance inexpressible
By numbers that have name. But this I urge,
Admitting motion in the Heavens, to show
Invalid that which thee to doubt it moved:
Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
To thee who hast thy dwelling here on earth.
God, to remove his ways from human sense,
Placed Heaven from earth so far, that earthly sight,
If it presume, might err in things too high,
And no advantage gain. What if the sun
Be centre to the world, and other stars,
By his attractive virtue and their own
Incited, dance about him various rounds?
Their wandering course now high, now low, then hid,
Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
In six thou seest; and what if seventh to these
The planet earth, so steadfast though she seem,
Insensibly three different motions move?
Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,
Moved contrary with thwart obliquities;
Or save the sun his labour, and that swift
Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb supposed,
Invisible else above all stars, the wheel
Of day and night; which needs not thy belief,
If earth, industrious of herself, fetch day
Travelling east, and with her part averse
From the sun's beam meet night, her other part
Still luminous by his ray. What if that light,
Sent from her through the wide transpicuous air
To the terrestrial moon be as a star,
Enlightening her by day, as she by night
This earth? reciprocal, if land be there,
Fields and inhabitants: her spots thou seest
As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce
Fruits in her softened soil, for some to eat
Allotted there; and other suns perhaps,

With their attendant moons, thus wilt descry,
Communicating male and female light;
Which too great sexes animate the world,
Stored in each orb perhaps with some that live.
For such vast room in nature unpossessed
By living soul, desert and desolate,
Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute
Each orb a glimpse of light, conveyed so far
Down to this habitable, which returns
Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.
But whether thus these things, or whether not;
Whether the sun, predominant in Heaven,
Rise on the earth; or earth rise on the sun;
He from the east his flaming road begin;
Or she from west her silent course advance,
With inoffensive pace that spinning sleeps
On her soft axle, while she paces even,
And bears thee soft with the smooth air along;
Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid;
Leave them to God above; him serve and fear;
Of other creatures, as him pleases best,
Wherever placed, let him dispose: joy thou
In what he gives to thee, this Paradise
And thy fair Eve; Heaven is for thee too high
To know what passes there; be lowly wise:
Think only what concerns thee and thy being;
Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there
Live, in what state, condition or degree;
Contented that thus far hath been revealed,
Not of earth only, but of highest Heaven."

To whom thus Adam, cleared of doubt, replied,
"How fully hast thou satisfied me, pure
Intelligence of Heaven, angel serene?
And freed from intricacies, taught to live
The easiest way, nor with perplexing thoughts
To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,
And not molest us unless we ourselves
Seek them with wand'ring thoughts, and notions vain.
But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
Unchecked, and of her roving is no end;
Till warned, or by experience taught, she learn,
That not to know at large of things remote
From use, obscure and subtle, but, to know
That which before us lies in daily life,
Is the prime wisdom: what is more, is fume,
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,
And renders us, in things that most concern,
Unpractised, unprepared, and still to seek.
Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
Useful; whence haply mention may arise
Of something not unseasonable to ask,
By sufferance, and thy wonted favour, deigned.
Thee I have heard relating what was done
Ere my remembrance: now hear me relate
My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard;
And day is yet not spent; till then thou seest
How subtly to detain thee I devise,
Inviting thee to hear while I relate,
Fond, were it not in hope of thy reply;
For while I sit with thee, I seem in Heaven.
And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
Than fruits of palm-tree pleasantest to thirst
And hunger both, from labour, at the hour
Of sweet repast; they satiate, and soon fill,
Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine
Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety."

To whom thus Raphael answered, heavenly meek:
"Nor are thy lips ungraceful, sire of men,
Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee
Abundantly his gifts hath also poured
Inward and outward both, his image fair:
Speaking or mute, all comeliness and grace
Attends thee, and each word, each motion forms;
Nor less think we in Heaven of thee on earth
Than our fellow-servant, and inquire
Gladly into the ways of God with man:
For God, we see, hath honoured thee and set
On man his equal love: say therefore on;
For I that day was absent, as befell,
Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure,
Far on excursion toward the gates of hell;
Squared in full legion (such command we had)
To see that none thence issued forth a spy,
Or enemy, while God was in his work;
Lest he, incensed at such eruption bold,
Destruction with creation might have mixed;
Not that they durst without his leave attempt,
But us he sends upon his high behests
For state, as sovereign King, and to insure
Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut
The dismal gates, and barricadoed strong;
But long ere our approaching heard within
Noise other than the sound of dance or song,
Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.
Glad we returned up to the coasts of light
Ere sabbath evening: so we had in charge.
But thy relation now; for I attend,
Pleased with thy words no less than thou with mine."

So spake the godlike power, and thus our sire:
"For man to tell how human life began,
Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?
Desire with thee still longer to converse
Induced me. As new waked from soundest sleep,
Soft on the flowery herb I found me laid,
In balmy sweat, which with his beams the sun
Soon dried, and on the reeking moisture fed.
Straight toward Heaven my wondering eyes I turned
And gazed awhile the ample sky; till, raised
By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung,
As thitherward endeavouring, and upright
Stood on my feet: about me round I saw

Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
And liquid lapse of murmuring streams; by these,
Creatures that lived and moved, and walked, or flew;
Birds on the branches warbling; all things smiled;
With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflowed.
Myself I then perused, and limb by limb
Surveyed, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
With supple joints, as lively vigour led:
But who I was, or where, or from what cause,
Knew not; to speak I tried, and forthwith spake;
My tongue obeyed, and readily could name
Whate'er I saw, 'Thou sun,' said I, 'fair light,
And thou enlightened earth, so fresh and gay,
Ye hills and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains,
And ye that live and move, fair creatures, tell,
Tell, if ye saw, how came I thus, how here?
Not of myself; by some great Maker then,
In goodness and in power pre-eminent:
Tell me, how may I know him, how adore,
From whom I have that thus I move and live,
And feel that I am happier than I know.'
While thus I called, and strayed, I knew not whither,
From where I first drew air, and first beheld
This happy light, when, answer none returned,
On a green shady bank, profuse of flowers
Pensive I sat me down; there gentle sleep
First found me, and with soft oppression seized
My drowsed sense, untroubled, though I thought
I then was passing to my former state
Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:
When suddenly stood at my head a dream,
Whose inward apparition gently moved
My fancy to believe I yet had being,
And lived: one came, methought, of shape divine,
And said, 'Thy mansion wants thee Adam; rise,
First man, of men innumerable ordained
First father! called by thee, I come thy guide
To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepared.'
So saying, by the hand he took me raised,
And over fields and waters, as in air
Smooth sliding without step, last led me up
A woody mountain; whose high top was plain,
A circuit wide, enclosed, with goodliest trees
Planted, with walks, and bowers, that what I saw
Of earth before scarce pleasant seemed. Each tree,
Loaden with fairest fruit that hung to the eye
Tempting, stirred in me sudden appetite
To pluck and eat; whereat I waked, and found
Before mine eyes all real, as the dream
Had lively shadowed: here had new begun
My wandering, had not he, who was my guide
Up hither, from among the trees appeared,
Presence divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,
In adoration at his feet I fell
Submiss: he reared me, 'and whom thou sought'st I am,'
Said mildly, 'Author of all this thou seest
Above, or round about thee, or beneath,
This Paradise I give thee, count it thine
To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat:
Of every tree that in the garden grows
Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth
But of the tree whose operation brings
Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set
The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith,
Amid the garden by the tree of life,
Remember what I warn thee, shun to taste,
And shun the bitter consequence: for know,
The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
Transgressed, inevitably thou shalt die,
From that day mortal, and this happy state
Shalt lose, expelled from hence into a world
Of wo and sorrow.' Sternly he pronounced
The rigid interdiction, which resounds
Yet dreadful in mine ear, though my choice
Not to incur; but soon his clear aspect
Returned, and gracious purpose thus renewed.
'Not only these fair bounds, but all the earth
To thee and to thy race I give: as lords
Possess it, and all things that therein live,
Or live in sea, or air; beast, fish, and fowl.
In sign whereof each bird and beast behold
After their kinds; I bring them to receive
From thee their names, and pay thee fealty
With low subjection; understand the same
Of fish within their watery residence,
Not hither summoned, since they can not change
Their element, to draw the thinner air.'
As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold
Approaching two and two; these cowering low
With blandishment; each bird stooped on his wing.
I named them, as they passed, and understood
Their nature, with such knowledge God endued
My sudden apprehension: but in these
I found not what methought I wanted still:
And to the heavenly vision thus presumed.
"'O by what name, for thou above all these,
Above mankind, or aught than mankind higher,
Surpasseth far my naming, how may I
Adore thee, Author of this universe,
And all this good to man? for whose well being
So amply, and with hands so liberal,
Thou hast provided all things: but with me
I see not who partakes. In solitude
What happiness, who can enjoy alone,
Or, all enjoying, what contentment find?'
Thus I presumptuous; and the vision bright,
As with a smile more brightened, thus replied:
"'What call'st thou solitude? is not the earth
With various living creatures, and the air,
Replenished, and all these at thy command
To come and play before thee? knowest thou not
Their language and their ways? they also know
And reason not contemptibly: with these

Find pastime and bear rule; thy realm is large.'
So spake the universal Lord, and seemed
So ordering. I, with leave of speech implored,
And humble deprecation, thus replied.
"'Let not my words offend thee, heavenly power:
My Maker, be propitious while I speak.
Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
And these inferior far beneath me set?
Among unequals what society
Can sort, what harmony or true delight?
Which must be mutual, in proportion due
Given and received; but in disparity,
The one intense, the other still remiss,
Can not well suit with either, but soon prove
Tedious alike; of fellowship I speak
Such as I seek, fit to participate
All rational delight, wherein the brute
Can not be human consort; they rejoice
Each with their kind, lion with lioness;
So fitly them in pairs thou hast combined:
Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl
So well converse, nor with the ox the ape:
Worse then can man with beast, and least of all.'
"Whereto th' Almighty answered, not displeased.
'A nice and subtle happiness, I see,
Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice
Of thy associates, Adam, and wilt taste
No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.
What think'st thou then of me, and this my state?
Seem I to thee sufficiently possessed
Of happiness, or not? who am alone
From all eternity; for none I know
Second to me or like, equal much less.
How have I then with whom to hold converse,
Save with the creatures which I made, and those
To me inferior, infinite descents
Beneath what other creatures are to thee?'
"He ceased; I lowly answered. 'To attain
The height and depth of thy eternal ways
All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things!
Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee
Is no deficience found; not so is man,
But in degree; the cause of his desire
By conversation with his like to help,
Or solace his defects. No need that thou
Should'st propagate, already infinite,
And through all numbers absolute, though one;
But man by number is to manifest
His single imperfection, and beget
Like of his like, his image multiplied,
In unity defective, which require
Collateral love, and dearest amity
Thou in thy secrecy, although alone,
Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not
Social communication; yet, so pleased,
Canst raise thy creature to what height thou wilt
Of union or communion, deified:
I, by conversing, can not these erect
From prone; nor in their ways complacence find.
Thus I emboldened spake, and freedom used
Permissive, and acceptance found; which gained
This answer from the gracious voice divine.
"'Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleased;
And find knowing, not of beasts alone,
Which thou hast rightly named, but of thyself;
Expressing well the spirit within thee free,
My image, not imparted to the brute;
Whose fellowship therefore unmeet for thee
Good reason wast thou freely shouldst dislike;
And be so minded still: I, ere thou spak'st,
Knew it not good for man to be alone,
And no such company as then thou saw'st
Intended thee, for trial only brought,
To see how thou could'st judge of fit and meet:
What next I bring shall please thee, be assured,
Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self,
Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire.'
"He ended, or I heard no more; for now
My earthly by his Heavenly overpowered,
Which it had long stood under, strained to th height
In that celestial colloquy sublime,
As with an object that excels the sense,
Dazzled and spent, sunk down, and sought repair
Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, called
By nature, as in aid, and closed mine eyes.
Mine eyes he closed, but open left the cell
Of fancy, my internal sight, by which,
Abstract as in a trance, methought I saw,
Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
Still glorious before whom awake I stood;
Who, stooping, opened my left side, and took
From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,
And life-blood streaming fresh; wide was the wound,
But suddenly with flesh filled up and healed:
The rib he formed and fashioned with his hands;
Under his forming hands a creature grew,
Manlike, but different sex; so lovely fair,
That what seemed fair in all the world, seemed now
Mean, or in her summed up, in her contained
And in her looks, which from that time infused
Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,
And into all things from her air inspired
The spirit of love and amorous delight.
She disappeared, and left me dark; I waked
To find her, or for ever to deplore
Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure:
When out of hope, behold her, not far off,
Such as I saw her in my dream, adorned
With what all earth or Heaven could bestow
To make her amiable: on she came,
Led by her Heavenly Maker, though unseen,
And guided by his voice; nor uninformed

Of nuptial sanctity, and marriage rites:
Grace was in all her steps, Heaven in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love.
I, overjoyed, could not forbear aloud.
" 'This turn hath made amends; thou hast fulfilled
Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
Giver of all things fair! but fairest this
Of all thy gifts! nor enviest. I now see
Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself
Before me; woman is her name, of man
Extracted: for this cause he shall forego
Father and mother, and to his wife adhere;
And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.'
" She heard me thus, and, though divinely brought,
Yet innocence and virgin modesty,
Her virtue and the conscience of her worth,
That would be wooed, and not unsought be won,
Not obvious, not obstrusive, but retired,
The more desirable; or, to say all,
Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
Wrought in her so, that, seeing me, she turned:
I followed her; she what was honour knew,
And with obsequious majesty approved
My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower
I led her blushing like the morn: all Heaven,
And happy constellations, on that hour
Shed their selectest influence; the earth
Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill;
Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs
Whispered it to the woods, and from their wings
Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,
Disporting, till the amorous bird of night
Sung spousal, and bid haste the evening star
On his hill top, to light the bridal lamp.
" Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought
My story to the sum of earthly bliss,
Which I enjoy; and must confess to find
In all things else, delight indeed, but such
As, used or not, works in the mind no change,
Nor vehement desire; these delicacies,
I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flowers,
Walks, and the melody of birds: but here
Far otherwise, transported I behold,
Transported touch; here passion first I felt,
Commotion strange! in all enjoyments else
Superior and unmoved; here only weak
Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance.
Or nature failed in me, and left some part
Not proof enough such object to sustain;
Or, from my side subducting, took perhaps
More than enough; at least on her bestowed
Too much of ornament, in outward show
Elaborate, of inward less exact.
For well I understand in the prime end
Of nature her th' inferior in the mind
And inward faculties, which most excel;
In outward also her resembling less
His image who made both, and less expressing
The character of that dominion given
O'er other creatures: yet when I approach
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems,
And in herself complete, so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say,
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best;
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded; wisdom in discourse with her
Loses discountenanced, and like folly shows;
Authority and reason on her wait,
As one intended first, not after made
Occasionally; and, to consummate all,
Greatness of mind, and nobleness, their seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard angelic placed."
To whom the angel, with contracted brow.
" Accuse not nature, she hath done her part;
Do thou but thine; and be not diffident
Of wisdom; she deserts thee not, if thou
Dismiss not her, when most thou need'st her nigh,
By attributing over much to things
Less excellent, as thou thyself perceiv'st.
For what admirest thou, what transports thee so,
An outside? fair, no doubt, and worthy well
Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love;
Not thy subjection: weigh with her thyself;
Then value: oftimes nothing profits more
Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right
Well managed; of that skill the more thou knowest,
The more she will acknowledge thee her head,
And to realities yield all her shows:
Made so adorn for thy deliget the more
So awful, that with honour thou may'st love
Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.
But if the sense of touch, whereby mankind
Is propagated, seem such dear delight
Beyond all other, think the same vouchsafed
To cattle and each beast; which would not be
To them made common and divulged, if aught
Therein enjoyed were worthy to subdue
The soul of man, or passion in him move.
What higher in her society thou find'st
Attractive, human, rational, love still;
In loving thou dost well, in passion not,
Wherein true love consists not; love refines
The thoughts, and heart enlarges; hath his seat
In reason, and is judicious; is the scale
By which to heavenly love thou may'st ascend,
Not sunk in carnal pleasure; for which cause
Among the beasts no mate for thee was found.'
To whom thus, half abashed, Adam replied
" Neither her outside, formed so fair, nor aught
In procreation common to all kinds
(Though higher of the genial bed by far,
And with mysterious reverence I deem)
So much delights me, as those graceful acts,

Those thousand decencies, that daily flow
From all her words and actions, mixed with love
And sweet compliance, which declare unfeigned
Union of mind, or in us both one soul;
Harmony to behold in wedded pair
More grateful than harmonious sound to the ear.
Yet these subject not; I to thee disclose
What inward thence I feel, not therefore foiled,
Who meet with various objects, from the sense
Variously representing: yet, still free,
Approve the best, and follow what I approve.
To love thou blam'st me not, for love, thou say'st,
Leads up to Heaven, is both the way and guide:
Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask:
Love not the heavenly spirits, and how their love
Express they? by looks only? or do they mix
Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch?"

To whom the angel, with a smile that glowed
Celestial rosy red, love's proper hue,
Answered. "Let it suffice thee that thou knowest
Us happy, and without love no happiness.
Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy'st,
(And pure thou wert created) we enjoy
In eminence, and obstacle find none
Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclusive bars;
Easier than air with air, if spirits embrace,
Total they mix, union of pure with pure
Desiring; nor restrained conveyance need,
As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.
But I can now no more; the parting sun
Beyond the earth's green cape and verdant isles
Hesperean sets, my signal to depart.
Be strong, live happy, and love! but, first of all,
Him, whom to love is to obey, and keep
His great command; take heed lest passion sway
Thy judgment to do aught, which else free will
Would not admit: thine, and of all thy sons,
The weal or woe in thee is placed; beware!
I in thy persevering shall rejoice,
And all the blest: stand fast; to stand or fall
Free in thine own arbitrement it lies.
Perfect within, no outward aid require;
And all temptation to transgress, repel."

So saying, he arose; whom Adam thus
Followed with benediction. "Since to part,
Go, heavenly guest, ethereal messenger,
Sent from whose sovereign goodness I adore!
Gentle to me and affable hath been
Thy condescension, and shall be honoured ever
With grateful memory: thou to mankind
Be good and friendly still, and oft return."

So parted they; the angel up to Heaven
From the thick shade, and Adam to his bower.

BOOK IX.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, having compassed the earth, with meditated guile returns, as a mist by night, into Paradise; enters into the serpent sleeping. Adam and Eve in the morning go forth to their labours, which Eve proposes to divide in several places, each labouring apart; Adam consents not, alleging the danger, lest that enemy, of whom they were forewarned, should attempt her, found alone; Eve, loath to be thought not circumspect or firm enough, urges her going apart, the rather desirous to make trial of her strength; Adam at last yields; the serpent finds her alone; his subtle approach, first gazing, then speaking; with much flattery extolling Eve above all other creatures. Eve, wondering to hear the serpent speak, asks how he attained to human speech and such understanding not till now; the serpent answers, that by tasting of a certain tree in the garden he attained both to speech and reason, till then void of both; Eve requires him to bring her to that tree, and finds it to be the tree of knowledge forbidden: the serpent, now grown bolder, with many wiles and arguments induces her at length to eat; she, pleased with the taste, deliberates a while whether to impart thereof to Adam or not; at last brings him of the fruit; relates what persuaded her to eat thereof; Adam, at first amazed, but perceiving her lost, resolves, through vehemence of love, to perish with her; and, extenuating the trespass, eats also of the fruit; the effects thereof in them both; they seek to cover their nakedness; then fall to variance and accusation of one another.

No more of talk, where God or angel guest
With man, as with his friend, familiar used
To sit indulgent, and with him partake
Rural repast: permitting him the while
Venial discourse unblamed: I now must change
Those notes to tragic; foul distrust, and breach
Disloyal; on the part of man, revolt,
And disobedience: on the part of Heaven,
Now alienated, distance and distaste,
Anger and just rebuke, and judgment given,
That brought into this world a world of wo,
Sin and her shadow Death, and Misery,
Death's harbinger: sad task! yet argument
Not less, but more heroic than the wrath
Of stern Achilles on his foe pursued
Thrice fugitive about Troy wall; or rage
Of Turnus for Lavinia disespoused;
Of Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long
Perplexed the Greek, and Cytherea's son;
If answerable style I can obtain
Of my celestial patroness, who deigns
Her nightly visitation unimplored,
And dictates to me slumbering, or inspires
Easy my unpremeditated verse:
Since first this subject for heroic song
Pleased me, long choosing, and beginning late;
Not sedulous by nature to indite
Wars, hitherto the only argument
Heroic deemed; chief mastery to dissect
With long and tedious havoc, fabled knights
In battles feigned; the better fortitude
Of patience and heroic martyrdom
Unsung; or to describe races and games,
Or tilting furniture, emblazoned shields,
Impresses quaint, caparisons and steeds;
Bases and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights
At joust and tournament; then marshalled feast
Served up in hall with sewers, and seneschals:

The skill of artifice or office mean,
Not that which justly gives heroic name
To person or to poem. Me of these
Nor skilled nor studious, higher argument
Remains, sufficient of itself to raise
That name, unless an age too late, or cold
Climate, or years, damp my intended wing
Depressed; and much they may, if all be mine,
Not hers, who brings it nightly to my ear.
The sun was sunk, and after him the star
Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring
Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter
'Twixt day and night, and now from end to end
Night's hemisphere had veiled the horizon round
When Satan, who late fled before the threats
Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improved
In meditated fraud and malice, bent
On man's destruction, maugre what might hap
Of heavier on himself, fearless returned.
By night he fled, and at midnight returned
From compassing the earth, cautious of day,
Since Uriel, regent of the sun, descried
His entrance, and forewarned the cherubim
That kept their watch; thence, full of anguish driven,
The space of seven continued nights he rode
With darkness; thrice the equinoctial line
He circled; four times crossed the car of night
From pole to pole, traversing each colure;
On the eighth returned, and, on the coast averse
From entrance or cherubic watch, by stealth
Found unsuspected way. There was a place,
Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought the change,
Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradise,
Into a gulf shot under ground, till part
Rose up a fountain by the tree of life;
In with the river sunk, and with it rose
Satan, involved in rising mist, then sought
Where to lie hid; sea he had searched and land,
From Eden over Pontus, and the pool
Mæotis, up beyond the river Ob;
Downward as far antarctic; and in length
West from Orontes to the ocean barred
At Darien; thence to the land where flows
Ganges and Indus: thus the orb he roamed
With narrow search, and, with inspection deep,
Considered every creature, which of all
Most opportune might serve his wiles, and found
The serpent subtlest beast of all the field.
Him, after long debate, irresolute
Of thoughts resolved, his final sentence chose
Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud in whom
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide
From sharpest sight: for, in the wily snake,
Whatever sleights none would suspicious mark,
As from his wit and native subtlety
Proceeding, which, in other beasts observed,
Doubt might beget of diabolic power
Active within, beyond the sense of brute.
Thus he resolved, but first, from inward grief,
His bursting passion into plaints thus poured.
"O earth, how like to Heaven, if not preferred
More justly, seat worthier of gods, as built
With second thoughts, reforming what was old!
For what God, after better, worse would build?
Terrestrial Heaven, danced round by other Heavens
That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,
Light above light, for thee alone, as seems,
In thee concent'ring all their precious beams
Of sacred influence! As God in Heaven
Is centre, yet extends to all, so thou,
Centering, receivest from all those orbs; in thee,
Not in themselves, all their known virtue, appears
Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth
Of creatures animate with gradual life
Of growth, sense, reason, all summed up in man.
With what delight could I have walked thee round,
If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange
Of hill and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,
Now land, now sea, and shores with forest crowned,
Rocks, dens, and caves! but I in none of these
Find place or refuge; and the more I see
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel
Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
Of contraries; all good to me becomes
Bane, and in Heaven much worse would be my state.
But neither here seek I, no nor in Heaven
To dwell, unless by mastering Heaven's Supreme,
Nor hope to be myself less miserable
By what I seek, but others to make such
As I, though thereby worse to me redound:
For only in destroying I find ease
To my relentless thoughts; and, him destroyed,
Or won to what may work his utter loss,
For whom all this was made, all this will soon
Follow, as to him linked in weal or wo;
In wo then; that destruction wide may rage:
To me shall be the glory sole among
The infernal powers, in one day to have marred
What he, Almighty styled, six nights and days
Continued making, and who knows how long
Before had been contriving? though perhaps
Not longer than since I, in one night, freed
From servitude inglorious well nigh half
The angelic name, and thinner left the throng
Of his adorers: he, to be avenged,
And to repair his numbers thus impaired,
Whether such virtue spent of old now failed
More angels to create, if they at least
Are his created, or to spite us more,
Determined to advance into our room
A creature formed of earth, and him endow,
Exalted from so base original,
With Heavenly spoils, our spoils. what he de creed

He effected; man he made, and for him built
Magnificent this world, and earth his seat,
Him lord pronounced; and, O indignity!
Subjected to his service angel wings,
And flaming ministers, to watch and tend
Their earthly charge: of these the vigilance
I dread; and, to elude, thus wrapt in mist
Of midnight vapour, glide obscure, and pry
In every bush and brake, where hap may find
The serpent sleeping, in whose mazy folds
To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.
Of foul descent! that I, who erst contended
With gods to sit the highest, am now constrained
Into a beast, and, mixed with bestial slime,
This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
That to the height of Deity aspired!
But what will not ambition and revenge
Descend to? who aspires, must down as low
As high he soared, obnoxious first or last
To basest things. Revenge, at first, though sweet,
Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils;
Let it; I reck not, so it light well aimed,
Since higher I fall short, on him who next
Provokes my envy, this new favourite
Of Heaven, this man of clay, son of despite,
Whom, us the more to spite, his Maker raised
From dust: spite then with spite is best repaid."

So saying, through each thicket dank or dry,
Like a black mist low creeping, he held on
His midnight search, where soonest he might find
The serpent: him fast sleeping soon he found
In labyrinth of many a round self-rolled,
His head the midst, well stored with subtle wiles:
Nor yet in horrid shade or dismal den,
Nor nocent yet, but on the grassy herb
Fearless unfeared he slept; in at his mouth
The Devil entered, and his brutal sense,
In heart or head, possessing, soon inspired,
With act intelligential; but his sleep
Disturbed not, waiting close th' approach of morn.

Now when as sacred light began to dawn
In Eden on the humid flowers, that breathed
Their morning incense, when all things that breathe
From the earth's great altar send up silent praise
To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,
And joined their vocal worship to the choir
Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake
The season, prime for sweetest scents and airs;
Then commune how that day they best may ply
Their growing work; for much their work outgrew
The hands' despatch of two gardening so wide,
And Eve first to her husband thus began.

"Adam, well may we labour still to dress
This garden, still to tend plant, herb and flower,
Our pleasant task enjoined; but, till more hands
Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
Luxurious by restraint; what we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
One night or two with wanton growth derides,
Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise,
Or hear what to my mind first thoughts present:
Let us divide our labours; thou where choice
Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind
The woodbine round this arbour, or direct
The clasping ivy where to climb; while I,
In yonder spring of roses intermixed
With myrtle, find what to redress till noon;
For while so near each other thus all day
Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
Casual discourse draw on, which intermits
Our day's work, brought to little, though begun
Early, and the hour of supper comes unearned?"

To whom mild answer Adam thus returned:
"Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond
Compare above all living creatures dear,
Well hast thou motioned, well thy thoughts employed,
How we might best fulfil the work which here
God hath assigned us, nor of me shalt pass
Unpraised: for nothing lovelier can be found
In woman, than to study household good,
And good works in her husband to promote.
Yet not so strictly hath our Lord imposed
Labour, as to debar us when we need
Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
Of looks and smiles: for smiles from reason flow,
To brute denied, and are of love the food;
Love, not the lowest end of human life.
For not to irksome toil, but to delight
He made us, and delight to reason joined.
These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands
Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
Assist us; but if much converse perhaps
Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield;
For solitude sometimes is best society,
And short retirement urges sweet return.
But other doubt possesses me, lest harm
Befall thee severed from me; for thou knowest
What hath been warned us, what malicious foe,
Envying our happiness, and of his own
Despairing, seeks to work us wo and shame
By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand
Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
His wish and best advantage, us asunder,
Hopeless to circumvent us joined, where each
To other speedy aid might lend at need:
Whether his first design be to withdraw
Our fealty from God, or to disturb
Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss
Enjoyed by us excites his envy more;
Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side
That gave thee being, still shades thee and protects

The wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
Who guards her, or with her the worst endures."
To whom the virgin majesty of Eve,
As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
With sweet austere composure thus replied.
"Offspring of Heaven and earth, and all earth's lord,
That such an enemy we have, who seeks
Our ruin, both by thee informed I learn
And from the parting angel overheard,
As in a shady nook I stood behind,
Just then returned at shut of evening flowers.
But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt
To God or thee, because we have a foe
May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
His violence thou fearest not, being such
As we, not capable of death or pain,
Can either not receive, or can repel.
His fraud is then thy fear, which plain infers
Thy equal fear that my firm faith and love
Can by his fraud be shaken or seduced;
Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy breast,
Adam, misthought of her to thee so dear?"
To whom with healing words Adam replied.
'Daughter of God and man, immortal Eve!
For such thou art, from sin and blame entire;
Not diffident of thee do I dissuade
Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid
Th' attempt itself intended by our foe.
For he who tempts, tho' in vain, at least asperses
The tempted with dishonour foul, supposed
Not incorruptible of faith, not proof
Against temptation: thou thyself with scorn
And anger wouldst resent the offered wrong,
Though ineffectual found; misdeem not then,
If such affront I labour to avert
From thee alone, which on us both at once
The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare,
Or daring, first on me the assault shall light.
Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;
Subtle he needs must be, who could seduce
Angels: nor think superfluous others' aid.
I from the influence of thy looks receive
Access in every virtue; in thy sight
More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,
Shame to be overcome or overreached,
Would utmost vigour raise, and raised unite.
Why should'st not thou like sense within thee feel
When I am present, and thy trial choose
With me, best witness of thy virtue tried?"
So spake domestic Adam in his care
And matrimonial love; but Eve, who thought
Less attributed to her faith sincere,
Thus her reply with accents sweet renewed.
"If this be our condition thus to dwell
In narrow circuit straitened by a foe,
Subtle or violent, we not endued
Single with light defence, wherever met,
How are we happy, still in fear of harm?
But harm precedes not sin: only our foe,
Tempting, affronts us with his foul esteem
Of our integrity; his foul esteem
Sticks no dishonour on our front, but turns
Foul on himself; then wherefore shunned or feared
By us? who rather double honour gain
From his surmise proved false, find peace within,
Favour from Heaven, our witness, from th' event.
And what is faith, love, virtue, unassayed
Alone, without exterior help sustained?
Let us not then suspect our happy state
Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
As not secure to single or combined.
Frail is our happiness, if this be so,
And Eden were no Eden, thus exposed."
To whom thus Adam fervently replied.
"O woman, best are all things as the will
Of God ordained them; his creating hand
Nothing imperfect or deficient left
Of all that he created, much less man,
Or aught that might his happy state secure,
Secure from outward force; within himself
The danger lies, yet lies within his power;
Against his will he can receive no harm.
But God left free the will; for what obeys
Reason is free; and reason has made right,
But bid her well beware, and still erect,
Lest, by some fair-appearing good surprised,
She dictate false, and misinform the will
To do what God expressly hath forbid.
Not then mistrust but tender love enjoins,
That I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me.
Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve
Since reason not impossibly may meet
Some specious object by the foe suborned,
And fall into deception unaware,
Not keeping strictest watch as she was warned.
Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
Were better, and most likely if from me
Thou sever not: trial will come unsought.
Would'st thou approve thy constancy, approve
First thy obedience; the other who can know,
Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?
But if thou think trial unsought may find
Us both securer than thus warned thou seemst,
Go: for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;
Go, in thy native innocence, rely
On what thou hast of virtue; summon all!
For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine.'
So spake the patriarch of mankind; but Eve
Persisted, yet submiss, though last replied.
"With thy permission then, and thus forewarned,

Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words
Touched only, that our trial, when least sought,
May find us both perhaps far less prepared,
The willinger I go, nor much expect
A foe so proud will first the weaker seek;
So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse."
Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand
Soft she withdrew, and, like a wood-nymph light
Oread or dryad, or of Delia's train,
Betook her to the groves; but Delia's self
In gait surpassed, and goddess-like deport,
Though not as she with bow and quiver armed,
But with such gardening tools as art, yet rude,
Guiltless of fire, had formed, or angels brought.
To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorned,
Likest she seemed Pomona, when she fled
Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime,
Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
Her long with ardent look his eye pursued
Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
Oft he to her his charge of quick return
Repeated; she to him as oft engaged
To be returned by noon amid the bower,
And all things in best order to invite
Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.
O much deceived, much failing, hapless Eve,
Of thy presumed return! event perverse!
Thou never from that hour in Paradise
Found'st either sweet repast, or sound repose;
Such ambush, hid among sweet flowers and shades,
Waited with hellish rancour imminent
To intercept thy way, or send thee back
Despoiled of innocence, of faith, of bliss!
For now, and since first break of dawn, the fiend,
Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come,
And on his quest, where likeliest he might find
The only two of mankind, but in them
The whole included race, his purposed prey,
In bower and field he sought, where any tuft
Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,
Their tendance, or plantation of delight;
By fountain or by shady rivulet
He sought them both, but wished his hap might find
Eve separate; he wished, but not with hope
Of what so seldom chanced; when to his wish,
Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
Half spied, so thick the roses blushing round
About her glowed, oft stooping to support
Each flower of slender stalk, whose head, though gay
Carnation, purple, azure, or specked with gold,
Hung drooping unsustained; them she upstays
Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while
Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,
From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.
Nearer he drew, and many a walk traversed
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine or palm;
Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen,
Among thick-woven arborets and flowers
Imbordered on each bank, the hand of Eve:
Spot more delicious than those gardens feigned
Or of revived Adonis, or renowned
Alcinous, host of old Laertes' son;
Or that, not mystic, where the sapient king
Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.
Much he the place admired, the person more.
As one who, long in populous city pent,
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe
Among the pleasant villages and farms
Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight:
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;
If chance with nymph-like step fair virgin pass,
What pleasing seemed, for her now pleases more;
She most, and in her look sums all delight:
Such pleasure took the serpent to behold
This flowery plat, the sweet recess of Eve
Thus early, thus alone; her heavenly form
Angelic, but more soft, and feminine,
Her graceful innocence, her every air
Of gesture, or least action, overawed
His malice, and with rapine sweet bereaved
His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought;
That space the evil-one abstracted stood
From his own evil, and for the time remained
Stupidly good, of enmity disarmed,
Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge:
But the hot hell that always in him burns,
Though in mid Heaven, soon ended his delight,
And tortures him now more, the more he sees
Of pleasure, not for him ordained: then soon
Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
Of mischief gratulating, thus excites.
"Thoughts, whither have ye led me! with what sweet
Compulsion thus transported, to forget
What hither brought us; hate, not love, nor hope
Of Paradise for hell, hope there to taste
Of pleasure, but, all pleasure to destroy,
Save what is in destroying: other joy
To me is lost. Then let me not let pass
Occasion which now smiles; behold alone
The woman, opportune to all attempts,
Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,
Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb
Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould;
Foe not informidable! exempt from wound,
I not; so much hath hell debased, and pain
Enfeebled me, to what I was in Heaven.
She fair, divinely fair, fit love for gods!
Not terrible, though terror be in love
And beauty, not approached by stronger hate,
Hate stronger, under show of love well feigned
The way which to her ruin now I tend."

So spake the enemy of mankind, enclosed
In serpent, inmate bad! and toward Eve
Addressed his way: not with indented wave,
Prone on the ground, as since: but on his rear,
Circular base of rising folds, that towered
Fold above fold, a surging maze! his head
Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes;
With burnished neck of verdant gold, erect
Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
Floated redundant; pleasing was his shape,
And lovely; never since of serpent kind
Lovelier; not those that in Illyria changed
Hermione and Cadmus, or the god
In Epidaurus; nor to which transformed
Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline was seen;
He with Olympias, this with her who bore
Scipio, the height of Rome. With tract oblique
At first, as one who sought access, but feared
To interrupt, sidelong he works his way.
As when a ship, by skilful steersman wrought,
Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind
Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sails;
So varied he, and of his tortuous train
Curled many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,
To lure her eye; she, busied, heard the sound
Of rustling leaves, but minded not, as used
To such disport before her through the field,
From every beast, more duteous at her call,
Than at Circean call the herd disguised.
He, bolder now, uncalled before her stood,
But as in gaze admiring: oft he bowed
His turret crest, and sleek enamelled neck,
Fawning, and licked the ground whereon she trod.
His gentle dumb expression turned at length
The eye of Eve to mark his play; he, glad
Of her attention gained, with serpent tongue
Organic, or impulse of vocal air,
His fraudulent temptation thus began.

"Wonder not, sovereign mistress, if perhaps
Thou canst, who art sole wonder! much less arm
Thy looks, the Heaven of mildness, with disdain,
Displeased that I approach thee thus, and gaze
Insatiate; I thus single, nor have feared
Thy awful brow, more awful thus retired.
Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,
Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore
With ravishment beheld, there best beheld
Where universally admired; but here
In this enclosure wild, these beasts among,
Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
Half what in thee is fair, one man except,
Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who should'st be seen
A goddess among gods, adored and served
By angels numberless, thy daily train."

So glozed the tempter, and his proem tuned:
Into the heart of Eve his words made way
Though at the voice much marvelling; at length,
Not unamazed, she thus in answer spake.

"What may this mean? language of man pronounced
By tongue of brute, and human sense expressed?
The first, at least, of these I thought denied
To beasts, whom God, on their creation-day,
Created mute to all articulate sound;
The latter I demur; for in their looks
Much reason, and in their actions, oft appears.
Thee, serpent, subtlest beast of all the field
I knew, but not with human voice endued;
Redouble then this miracle, and say,
How cam'st thou speakable of mute, and now
To me so friendly grown above the rest
Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight?
Say, for such wonder claims attention due."

To whom the guileful tempter thus replied.

"Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve!
Easy to me it is to tell thee all
What thou commandest, and right thou shouldst be obeyed;
I was at first as other beasts that graze
The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
As was my food; nor aught but food discerned
Or sex, and apprehended nothing high:
Till, on a day roving the field, I chanced
A goodly tree far distant to behold,
Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mixed,
Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;
When from the boughs a savoury odour blown,
Grateful to appetite, more pleased my sense
Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats
Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at even,
Unsucked of lamb or kid, that tend their play.
To satisfy the sharp desire I had
Of tasting those fair apples, I resolved
Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,
Powerful persuaders, quickened at the scent
Of that alluring fruit, urged me so keen.
About the mossy trunk I wound me soon,
For, high from ground, the branches would require
Thy utmost reach or Adam's: round the tree
All other beasts that saw, with like desire
Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.
Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill
I spared not; for such pleasure till that hour,
At feed or fountain never had I found.
Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
Strange alteration in me, to degree
Of reason in my inward powers, and speech
Wanted not long, though to this shape retained.
Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
I turned my thoughts, and with capacious mind
Considered all things visible in Heaven,
Or earth, or middle, all things fair and good:

But all that fair and good in thy divine
Semblance, and in thy beauty's heavenly ray,
United I beheld; no fair to thine
Equivalent or second, which compelled
Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come
And gaze, and worship thee, of right declared
Sovereign of creatures, universal dame!"
So talked the spirited, sly snake; and Eve,
Yet more amazed, unwary thus replied.
"Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt
The virtue of that fruit, in thee first proved:
But say, where grows the tree? from hence how far?
For many are the trees of God that grow
In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
To us; in such abundance lies our choice,
As leaves a greater store of fruit untouched,
Still hanging incorruptible, till men
Grow up to their provision, and more hands
Help to disburden Nature of her birth."
To whom the wily adder, blithe and glad
"Empress, the way is ready, and not long;
Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,
Fast by a fountain, one small thicket past
Of blowing myrrh and balm: if thou accept
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon."
"Lead then," said Eve. He, leading, swiftly rolled
In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,
To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
Brightens his crest; as when a wandering fire,
Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night
Condenses, and the cold environs round,
Kindled through agitation to a flame,
Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends,
Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
Misleads the amazed night wanderer from his way
To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool;
There swallowed up and lost, from succour far.
So glistered the dire snake, and into fraud
Led Eve, our credulous mother to the tree
Of prohibition, root of all our wo;
Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake.
"Serpent, we might have spared our coming hither,
Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess,
The credit of whose virtue rests with thee;
Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects.
But of this tree we may not taste nor touch;
God so commanded, and left that command
Sole daughter of his voice; the rest, we live
Law to ourselves; our reason is our law."
To whom the tempter guilefully replied.
"Indeed! hath God then said that of the fruit
Of all these garden trees ye shall not eat,
Yet lords declared of all in earth or air?"
To whom thus Eve, yet sinless. "Of the fruit
Of each tree in the garden we may eat;
But of the fruit of this fair tree amidst
The garden, God hath said, 'Ye shall not eat
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.'"
She scarce had said, though brief, when now more bold
The tempter, but with show of zeal and love
To man, and indignation at his wrong,
New parts put on; and, as to passion moved,
Fluctuates disturbed, yet comely and in act
Raised, as of some great matter to begin.
As when of old some orator renowned,
In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence
Flourished, since mute, to some great cause addressed,
Stood in himself collected; while each part,
Motion, each act, won audience ere the tongue;
Sometimes in height began, as no delay
Of preface brooking, through his zeal of right:
So standing, moving, or to height up grown,
The tempter, all impassioned, thus began.
"O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving plant,
Mother of science! now I feel thy power
Within me clear, not only to discern
Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
Of highest agents, deemed however wise.
Queen of this universe! do not believe
Those rigid threats of death; ye shall not die:
How should ye? by the fruit? it gives you life
To knowledge: by the threatener? look on me,
Me who have touched and tasted, yet both live,
And life more perfect have attained than fate
Meant me, by venturing higher than my lot.
Shall that be shut to man, which to the beast
Is open? or will God incense his ire
For such a petty trespass? and not praise
Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain
Of death denounced, whatever thing death be,
Deterred not from achieving what might lead
To happier life, knowledge of good and evil;
Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil
Be real, why not known, since easier shunned?
God therefore can not hurt ye, and be just;
Not just, not God; not feared then, nor obeyed:
Your fear itself of death removes the fear.
Why then was this forbid? Why, but to awe?
Why, but to keep ye low and ignorant,
His worshippers? He knows that in the day
Ye eat thereof, your eyes that seem so clear,
Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then
Opened and cleared, and ye shall be as gods,
Knowing both good and evil, as they know.
That ye shall be as gods, since I as man,
Internal man, is but proportion meet;
I, of brute, human; ye, of human, gods.
So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off
Human, to put on gods; death to be wished,
Though threatened, which no worse than this can bring.
And what are gods, that man may not become

As they, participating godlike food?
The gods are first, and that advantage use
On our belief, that all from them proceeds:
I question it; for this fair earth I see,
Warmed by the sun, producing every kind;
Them, nothing; if they all things, who enclosed
Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,
That whoso eats thereof, forthwith attains
Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies
The offence, that man should thus attain to know?
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree
Impart against his will, if all be his?
Or is it envy? and can envy dwell
In heavenly breasts? These, these and many more
Causes import your need of this fair fruit.
Goddess humane, reach then, and freely taste!"
He ended; and his words, replete with guile,
Into her heart too easy entrance won:
Fixed on the fruit she gazed, which to behold
Might tempt alone; and in her ears the sound
Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregned
With reason, to her seeming, and with truth:
Meanwhile the hour of noon drew on, and waked
An eager appetite, raised by the smell
So savoury of that fruit, with which desire,
Inclinable now grown to touch or taste,
Solicited her longing eye; yet first
Pausing a while, thus to herself she mused.
"Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits,
Though kept from man, and worthy to be admired:
Whose taste, too long forborne, at first assay
Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
The tongue not made for speech, to speak thy praise:
Thy praise he also, who forbids thy use,
Conceals not from us, naming thee the tree
Of knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;
Forbids us then to taste! but his forbidding
Commends thee more, while it infers the good
By thee communicated, and our want:
For good unknown, sure is not had; or, had
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
In plain then, what forbids he but to know,
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?
Such prohibitions bind not. But, if death
Bind us with after-bands, what profits then
Our inward freedom? In the day we eat
Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die.
How dies the serpent? he hath eaten and lives,
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,
Irrational till then. For us alone
Was death invented? or to us denied
This intellectual food, for beasts reserved?
For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first
Hath tasted, envies not, but brings with joy
The good befallen him, author unsuspect,
Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.
What fear I then? rather, what know to fear
Under this ignorance of good and evil,
Of God or death, of law or penalty?
Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
Of virtue to make wise: what hinders then
To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?"
So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she eat!
Earth felt the wound; and Nature from her seat,
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of wo,
That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk
The guilty serpent; and well might; for Eve,
Intent now wholly on her taste, naught else
Regarded; such delight till then, as seemed,
In fruit she never tasted, whether true
Or fancied so, through expectation high
Of knowledge, nor was Godhead from her thought.
Greedily she ingorged without restraint,
And knew not eating death: satiate at length,
And heightened as with wine, jocund and boon,
Thus to herself she pleasingly began.
"O sovereign, virtuous, precious of all trees
In Paradise! of operation blest
To sapience, hitherto obscured, infamed,
And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
Created; but henceforth my early care,
Not without song, each morning, and due praise
Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
Of thy full branches offered free to all;
Till, dieted by thee, I grow mature
In knowledge, as the gods, who all things know;
Though others envy what they can not give:
For, had the gift been theirs, it had not here
Thus grown. Experience, next to thee I owe,
Best guide; not following thee, I had remained
In ignorance; thou openest wisdom's way,
And giv'st access, though secret she retire.
And I perhaps am secret: Heaven is high,
High, and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thing on earth; and other care, perhaps,
May have diverted from continual watch
Our great Forbidder, safe with all his spies
About him. But to Adam in what sort
Shall I appear? shall I to make him known
As yet my change, and give him to partake
Full happiness with me, or rather not,
But keep the odds of knowledge in my power
Without copartner? so to add what wants
In female sex, the more to draw his love,
And render me more equal; and perhaps,
A thing not undesirable, sometime
Superior; for, inferior, who is free?
This may be well: but what if God have seen,
And death ensue? then I shall be no more!
And Adam, wedded to another Eve,
Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;
A death to think! Confirmed then I resolve,
Adam shall share with me in bliss or wo:
So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
I could endure, without him live no life."

So saying, from the tree her steps she turned;
But first low reverence done, as to the power
That dwelt within, whose presence had infused
Into the plant sciential sap, derived
From nectar, drink of gods. Adam, the while,
Waiting desirous her return, had wove
Of choicest flowers a garland, to adorn
Her tresses, and her rural labours crown;
As reapers oft are wont their harvest queen.
Great joy he promised to his thoughts, and new
Solace in her return, so long delayed:
Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill,
Misgave him; he the faltering measure felt;
And forth to meet her went, the way she took
That morn when first they parted; by the tree
Of knowledge he must pass; there he her met,
Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand
A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smiled,
New gathered, and ambrosial smell diffused.
To him she hasted, in her face excuse
Came prologue, and apology too prompt;
Which, with bland words at will, she thus addressed.

"Hast thou not wondered, Adam, at my stay?
Thee I have missed, and thought it long, deprived
Thy presence; agony of love till now
Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more
Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought,
The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear:
This tree is not, as we are told, a tree
Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown
Opening the way, but of divine effect
To open eyes, and make them gods who taste;
And hath been tasted such: the serpent wise,
Or not restrained as we, or not obeying,
Hath eaten of the fruit, and is become,
Not dead, as we are threatened, but thenceforth
Endued with human voice and human sense,
Reasoning to admiration; and with me
Persuasively hath so prevailed, that I
Have also tasted, and have also found
The effects to correspond; opener mine eyes,
Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,
And growing up to Godhead; which for thee
Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss;
Tedious, unshared with thee, and odious soon.
Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot
May join us, equal joy, as equal love;
Lest, thou not tasting, different degree
Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce
Deity for thee, when fate will not permit."

Thus Eve with countenance blithe her story told;
But in her cheek distemper flushing glowed.
On the other side, Adam, soon as he heard
The fatal trespass done by Eve, amazed,
Astonished stood and blank, while horror chill
Ran through his veins, and all his joints relaxed;
From his slack hand the garland wreathed for Eve
Down dropt, and all the faded roses shed:
Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length
First to himself he inward silence broke.

"O fairest of creation, last and best
Of all God's works, creature in whom excelled
Whatever can to sight or thought be formed,
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!
How art thou lost! how on a sudden lost,
Defaced, deflowered, and now to death devote!
Rather, how hast thou yielded to transgress
The strict forbiddance, how to violate
The sacred fruit forbidden! some cursed fraud
Of enemy hath beguiled thee, yet unknown,
And me with thee hath ruined; for with thee
Certain my resolution is to die:
How can I live without thee! how forego
The sweet converse, and love so dearly joined,
To live again in these wild woods forlorn!
Should God create another Eve, and I
Another rib afford, yet loss of thee
Would never from heart: no, no! I feel
The link of nature draw me: flesh of flesh,
Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or wo."

So having said, as one from sad dismay
Recomforted, and, after thoughts disturbed,
Submitting to what seemed remediless,
Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turned.

"Bold deed thou hast presumed, adventurous Eve,
And peril great provoked, who thus hast dared,
Had it been only coveting to eye
That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence,
Much more to taste it under ban to touch.
But past who can recall, or done undo?
Not God omnipotent, nor Fate; yet so
Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact
Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,
Profaned first by the serpent, by him first
Made common and unhallowed, ere our taste;
Nor yet on him found deadly; he yet lives;
Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live, as man,
Higher degree of life, inducement strong
To us, as likely tasting to attain
Proportional ascent, which can not be
But to be gods, or angels, demi-gods.
Nor can I think that God Creator wise,
Though threatening, will in earnest so destroy
Us his prime creatures, dignified so high,
Set over all his works, which in our fall,
For us created, needs with us must fail,
Dependent made; so God shall uncreate,
Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose;
Not well conceived of God, who, though his power
Creation could repeat, yet would be loath
Us to abolish, lest the adversary
Triumph, and say; 'Fickle their state whom God

Most favours; who can please him long? Me first
He ruined, now mankind; whom will he next?"
Matter of scorn, not to be given the foe.
However I with thee have fixed my lot,
Certain to undergo like doom: if death
Consort with thee, death is to me as life;
So forcible within my heart I feel
The bond of nature draw me to my own;
My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;
Our state can not be severed; we are one,
One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself."
So Adam; and thus Eve to him replied.
"O glorious trial of exceeding love,
Illustrious evidence, example high!
Engaging me to emulate; but, short
Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,
Adam? from whose dear side I boast me sprung,
And gladly of our union hear thee speak,
One heart, one soul in both; whereof good proof
This day affords, declaring thee resolved,
Rather than death, or aught than death more dread,
Shall separate us, linked in love so dear,
To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
If any be, of tasting this fair fruit,
Whose virtue (for of good still good proceeds,
Direct, or by occasion) hath presented
This happy trial of thy love, which else
So eminently never had been known.
Were it I thought death menaced would ensue
This my attempt, I would sustain alone
The worst, and not persuade thee, rather die
Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact
Pernicious to thy peace; chiefly assured
Remarkably so late of thy so true,
So faithful love unequalled; but I feel
Far otherwise the event; not death, but life
Augmented, opened eyes, new hopes, new joys,
Taste so divine, that what of sweet before
Had touched my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.
On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
And fear of death deliver to the winds."
So saying, she embraced him, and for joy
Tenderly wept; much won that he his love
Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur
Divine displeasure for her sake, or death
In recompense (for such compliance bad
Such recompense best merits) from the bough
She gave him of that fair enticing fruit
With liberal hand: he scrupled not to eat,
Against his better knowledge; not deceived,
But fondly overcome with female charm.
Earth trembled from her entrails, as again
In pangs; and Nature gave a second groan;
Sky lowered; and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept at completing of the mortal sin
Original: while Adam took no thought,
Eating his fill: nor Eve to iterate
Her former trespass feared, the more to sooth
Him with her loved society; that now,
As with new wine intoxicated both,
They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
Divinity within them breeding wings,
Wherewith to scorn the earth: but that false fruit
Far other operation first displayed,
Carnal desire inflaming; he on Eve
Began to cast lascivious eyes; she him
As wantonly repaid; in lust they burn:
Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move.
"Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
And elegant, of sapience no small part;
Since to each meaning savour we apply,
And palate called judicious; I the praise
Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purveyed.
Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstained
From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be
In things to us forbidden, it might be wished,
For this one tree had been forbidden ten.
But come, so well refreshed, now let us play,
As meet is, after such delicious fare,
For never did thy beauty, since the day
I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorned
With all perfections, so inflame my sense
With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now
Than ever; bounty of this virtuous tree!"
So said he, and forbore not glance or toy
Of amorous intent, well understood
Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire,
Her hand he seized, and to a shady bank,
Thick overhead with verdant roof embowered,
He led her, nothing loath; flowers were the couch,
Pansies, and violets, and asphodel,
And hyacinth, earth's freshest softest lap.
There they their fill of love and love's disport
Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
The solace of their sin; till dewy sleep
Oppressed them, wearied with their amorous play
Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,
That with exhilarating vapour bland
About their spirits had played, and inmost powers
Made err, was now exhaled; and grosser sleep,
Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams
Encumbered, now had left them; up they rose
As from unrest; and, each the other viewing,
Soon found their eyes how opened, and their minds
How darkened; innocence, that as a veil
Had shadowed them from knowing ill, was gone;
Just confidence and native righteousness,
And honour, from about them, naked left
To guilty shame; he covered, but his robe
Uncovered more. So rose the Danite strong,
Herculean Samson, from the harlot-lap
Of Philistean Dalilah, and waked
Shorn of his strength, they destitute and bare
Of all their virtue: silent and in face
Confounded, long they sat, as stricken mute,

Till Adam, though not less than Eve abashed,
At length gave utterance to these words constrained.
"O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give ear
To that false worm, of whomsoever taught
To counterfeit man's voice; true in our fall,
False in our promised rising; since our eyes
Opened we find indeed, and find we know
Both good and evil; good lost, and evil got;
Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know,
Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,
Of innocence, of faith, of purity,
Our wonted ornaments now soiled and stained,
And in our faces evident the signs
Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store;
Even shame, the last of evils; of the first
Be sure then. How shall I behold the face
Henceforth of God or angel, erst with joy
And rapture so oft beheld? those heavenly shapes
Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze
Insufferably bright. O might I here
In solitude live savage; in some glade
Obscured, where highest woods, impenetrable
To star or sunlight, spread their umbrage broad
And brown as evening: cover me, ye pines!
Ye cedars with innumerable boughs
Hide me, where I may never see them more!
But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
What best may for the present serve to hide
The parts of each from other, that seem most
To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen:
Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves together sew'd,
And girded on our loins, may cover round
Those middle parts; that this new comer, shame,
There sit not, and reproach us as unclean."
So counselled he, and both together went
Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose
The fig-tree; not that kind for fruit renowned,
But such as at this day to Indians known,
In Malabar or Decan spreads her arms
Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
About the mother tree, a pillared shade
High over-arched, and echoing walks between:
There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
At loop-holes cut through thickest shade: Those leaves
They gathered, broad as Amazonian targe,
And, with what skill they had, together sewed,
To gird their waist; vain covering, if to hide
Their guilt and dreaded shame! O how unlike
To that first naked glory! Such of late
Columbus found th' American, so girt
With feathered cincture, naked else, and wild
Among the trees on isles and woody shores.
Thus fenced, and as they thought, their shame in part
Covered, but not at rest or ease of mind,
They sat them down to weep; nor only tears
Rained at their eyes, but high winds worse within
Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,
Mistrust, suspicion, discord, and shook sore
Their inward state of mind, calm region once
And full of peace, now tost and turbulent:
For understanding ruled not, and the will
Heard not her lore; both in subjection now
To sensual appetite, who from beneath,
Usurping over sovereign reason, claimed
Superior sway: from thus distempered breast
Adam, estranged in look and altered style,
Speech intermitted thus to Eve renewed.
"Would thou hadst hearkened to my words, and stayed
With me, as I besought thee, when that strange
Desire of wandering, this unhappy morn,
I know not whence possessed thee; we had then
Remained still happy; not as now despoiled
Of all our good; shamed, naked, miserable!
Let none henceforth seek needless cause t' approve
The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek
Such proof, conclude, they then begin to fail."
To whom, soon moved with touch of blame, thus Eve.
"What words have passed thy lips, Adam, severe!
Imputest thou that to my default, or will
Of wandering, as thou call'st it, which who knows
But might as ill have happened thou being by,
Or to thyself perhaps? hadst thou been there,
Or here th' attempt, thou couldst not have discerned
Fraud in the serpent, speaking as he spake,
No ground of enmity between us known,
Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.
Was I to have never parted from thy side?
As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.
Being as I am, why didst not thou, the head,
Command me absolutely not to go,
Going into such danger as thou saidst?
Too facile then thou didst not much gainsay,
Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
Hadst thou been firm and fixed in thy dissent,
Neither had I transgressed, nor thou with me."
To whom then first incensed Adam replied.
"Is this the love, is this the recompense
Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve, expressed
Immutable, when thou wert lost, not I;
Who might have lived and joyed immortal bliss,
Yet willingly chose rather death with thee?
And am I now upbraided as the cause
Of thy transgressing? not enough severe,
It seems, in thy restraint: what could I more?
I warned thee, I admonished thee, foretold
The danger, and the lurking enemy
That lay in wait; beyond this had been force,
And force upon free will hath here no place
But confidence then bore thee on; secure,
Either to meet no danger, or to find

Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps
I also erred, in over much admiring
What seemed in thee so perfect, that I thought
No evil durst attempt thee; but I rue
That error now, which is become my crime,
And thou the accuser. Thus it shall befall
Him, who, to worth in woman overtrusting,
Lets her will rule: restraint she will not brook;
And, left to herself, if evil thence ensue,
She first his weak indulgence will accuse."
Thus they in mutual accusation spent
The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning,
And of their vain contest appeared no end.

BOOK X.

THE ARGUMENT.

Man's transgression known, the guardian angels forsake Paradise, and return up to Heaven to approve their vigilance, and are approved; God declaring that the entrance of Satan could not be by them prevented. He sends his Son to judge the transgressors, who descends and gives sentence accordingly; then in pity clothes them both, and reascends. Sin and Death, sitting till then at the gates of hell, by wondrous sympathy feeling the success of Satan in this new world, and the sin by man there committed, resolve to sit no longer confined in hell, but to follow Satan their sire up to the place of man; to make the way easier from hell to this world to and fro, they pave a broad highway or bridge over chaos, according to the track that Satan first made; then, preparing for earth, they meet him, proud of his success, returning to hell; their mutual gratulation. Satan arrives at Pandemonium; in full assembly relates with boasting his success against man; instead of applause is entertained with a general hiss by all his audience, transformed with himself also suddenly into serpents, according to his doom given in Paradise; then deluded with a show of the forbidden tree springing up before them, they, greedily reaching to take of the fruit, chew dust and bitter ashes. The proceedings of Sin and Death; God foretells the final victory of his Son over them, and the renewing of all things; but, for the present, commands his angels to make several alterations in the Heavens and elements. Adam, more and more perceiving his fallen condition, heavily bewails, rejects the condolement of Eve; she persists, and at length appeases him; then to evade the curse likely to fall on their offspring, proposes to Adam violent ways, which he approves not; but, conceiving better hope, puts her in mind of the late promise made them, that the seed should be revenged on the serpent, and exhorts her with him to seek peace of the offended Deity, by repentance and supplication.

Meanwhile, the heinous and despiteful act
Of Satan done in Paradise, and how
He in the serpent had perverted Eve,
Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,
Was known in Heaven; for what can 'scape the eye
Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart
Omniscient? who, in all things wise and just,
Hindered not Satan to attempt the mind
Of man, with strength entire and free will armed,
Complete to have discovered and repulsed
Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend.
For still they knew, and ought to have still remembered
The high injunction not to taste that fruit,
Whoever tempted; which they not obeying,
Incurred (what could they less?) the penalty
And, manifold in sin, deserved to fall.
Up into Heaven from Paradise in haste
The angelic guards ascended, mute and sad
For man, for of his state by this they knew,
Much wondering how the subtle fiend had stolen
Entrance unseen. Soon as the unwelcome news
From earth arrived at Heaven gate, displeased
All were who heard; dim sadness did not spare
That time celestial visages, yet, mixed
With pity, violated not their bliss.
About the new-arrived, in multitudes
Th' ethereal people ran, to hear and know
How all befell: they towards the throne supreme,
Accountable, made haste to make appear,
With righteous plea, their utmost vigilance,
And easily approved; when the most High
Eternal Father, from his secret cloud,
Amidst in thunder uttered thus his voice.
"Assembled angels, and ye powers returned
From unsuccessful charge, be not dismayed,
Nor troubled at these tidings from the earth,
Which your sincerest care could not prevent;
Foretold so lately what would come to pass,
When first this tempter crossed the gulf from hell.
I told ye then he should prevail, and speed
On his bad errand; man should be seduced,
And flattered out of all, believing lies
Against his Maker; no decree of mine
Concurring to necessitate his fall,
Or touch with lightest moment of impulse
His free will, to her own inclining left
In even scale. But fallen he is; and now
What rests, but that the mortal sentence pass
On his transgression,—death denounced that day?
Which he presumes already vain and void,
Because not yet inflicted, as he feared,
By some immediate stroke; but soon shall find
Forbearance no acquittance, ere day end.
Justice shall not return as bounty scorned.
But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee,
Vicegerent Son? to thee I have transferred
All judgment, whether in Heaven, or earth, or hell.
Easy it may be seen that I intend
Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee,
Man's friend, his mediator, his designed
Both ransom and Redeemer voluntary,
And destined man himself to judge man fallen."
So spake the Father, and unfolding bright
Toward the right-hand his glory, on the Son
Blazed forth unclouded Deity; he full
Resplendent all his Father manifest
Expressed, and thus divinely answered mild.
"Father eternal, thine is to decree;

Mine, both in Heaven and earth, to do thy will
Supreme; that thou in me, thy Son beloved,
Mayest ever rest well pleased. I go to judge
On earth these thy transgressors; but thou knowest,
Whoever judged, the worst on me must light,
When time shall be; for so I undertook
Before thee; and, not repenting, this obtain
Of right, that I may mitigate their doom
On me derived; yet I shall temper so
Justice with mercy, as may illustrate most
Them fully satisfied, and thee appease.
Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none
Are to behold the judgment, but the judged,
Those two; the third best absent is condemned,
Convict by flight, and rebel to all law:
Conviction to the serpent none belongs."

Thus saying, from his radiant seat he rose
Of high collateral glory: him thrones, and powers,
Princedoms, and dominations ministrant,
Accompanied to Heaven gate; from whence
Eden and all the coast in prospect lay.
Down he descended straight; the speed of gods
Time counts not, though with swiftest minutes winged.

Now was the sun in western cadence low
From noon, and gentle airs, due at their hour,
To fan the earth now waked, and usher in
The evening cool; when he, from wrath more cool,
Came the mild Judge, and Intercessor both,
To sentence man: the voice of God they heard,
Now walking in the garden, by soft winds
Brought to their ears, while day declined; they heard,
And from his presence hid themselves among
The thickest trees, both man and wife; till God,
Approaching, thus to Adam called aloud.
"Where art thou, Adam, wont with joy to meet
My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,
Not pleased, thus entertained with solitude,
Where obvious duty erewhile appeared unsought:
Or come I less conspicuous, or what change
Absents thee, or what chance detains? Come forth."

He came, and with him Eve, more loath, though first
To offend; discountenanced both, and discomposed:
Love was not in their looks, either to God
Or to each other, but apparent guilt,
And shame, and perturbation, and despair,
Anger, and obstinacy, and hate, and guile.
Whence Adam, faltering long, thus answered brief:
"I heard thee in the garden, and of thy voice
Afraid, being naked, hid myself." To whom
The gracious Judge without revile replied:
"My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not feared,
But still rejoiced; how is it now become
So dreadful to thee? that thou art naked, who
Hath told thee? hast thou eaten of the tree
Whereof I gave thee charge thou should'st not eat?"

To whom thus Adam, sore beset, replied.
"O Heaven! in evil strait this day I stand
Before my Judge, either to undergo
Myself the total crime, or to accuse
My other self, the partner of my life;
Whose failing, while her faith to me remains,
I should conceal, and expose to blame
By my complaint; but strict necessity
Subdues me, and calamitous constraint,
Lest on my head both sin and punishment,
However insupportable, be all
Devolved; though, should I hold my peace, yet thou
Wouldst easily detect what I conceal.
This woman, whom thou mad'st to be my help,
And gav'st me as thy perfect gift, so good,
So fit, so acceptable, so divine,
That from her hand I could suspect no ill,
And what she did, whatever in itself,
Her doing seemed to justify the deed;
She gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

To whom the sovereign Presence thus replied.
"Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey
Before his voice, or was she made thy guide,
Superior, or but equal, that to her
Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place
Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,
And for thee, whose perfection far excelled
Hers in all real dignity? Adorned
She was indeed, and lovely, to attract
Thy love, not thy subjection; and her gifts
Were such as under government well seemed,
Unseemly to bear rule, which was thy part
And person, hadst thou known thyself aright."

So having said, he thus to Eve in few.
"Say, woman, what is this which thou hast done?"

To whom sad Eve, with shame nigh overwhelmed,
Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge
Bold or loquacious, thus abashed replied.
"The serpent me beguiled, and I did eat."

Which when the Lord God heard, without delay
To judgment he proceeded on the accused
Serpent, though brute, unable to transfer
The guilt on him who made him instrument
Of mischief, and polluted from the end
Of his creation: justly then accursed
As vitiated in nature: more to know
Concerned not man (since he no further knew
Nor altered his offence; yet God at last
To Satan, first in sin, his doom applied,
Though in mysterious terms, judged as then best
And on the serpent thus his curse let fall.

"Because thou hast done this, thou art accursed
Above all cattle, each beast of the field;
Upon thy belly grovelling thou shalt go,
And dust thou shalt eat all the days of thy life.
Between thee and the woman I will put

Enmity, and between thine and her seed;
Her seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel."

So spake this oracle, then verified
When Jesus, son of Mary, second Eve,
Saw Satan fall, like lightning, down from Heaven,
Prince of the air; then, rising from his grave,
Spoiled principalities and powers, triumphed
In open show, and, with ascension bright,
Captivity led captive through the air,
The realm itself of Satan long usurped,
Whom he shall tread at last under our feet;
Even he who now foretold his fatal bruise;
And to the woman thus his sentence turned.

"Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply
By thy conception: children thou shalt bring
In sorrow forth; and to thy husband's will
Thine shall submit; he over thee shall rule."

On Adam last thus judgment he pronounced:
"Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife,
And eaten of the tree concerning which
I charged thee, saying, 'Thou shalt not eat thereof:'
Cursed is the ground for thy sake; thou in sorrow
Shalt eat thereof all the days of thy life;
Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth
Unbid; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;
In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,
Till thou return unto the ground; for thou
Out of the ground wast taken, know thy birth,
For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return."

So judged he man, both Judge and Saviour sent;
And the instant stroke of death denounced that day
Removed far off; then, pitying how they stood
Before him naked to the air, that now
Must suffer change, disdained not to begin
Thenceforth the form of servant to assume,
As when he washed his servants' feet; so now.
As father of his family, he clad
Their nakedness with skins of beasts, or slain;
Or as the snake with youthful coat repaid;
And thought not much to clothe his enemies:
Nor he their outward only with the skins
Of beasts, but inward nakedness much more
Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness
Arraying, covered from his Father's sight.
To him with swift ascent he up returned,
Into his blissful bosom reassumed
In glory, as of old; to him appeased
All, though all-knowing, what had passed with man
Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.

Meanwhile ere thus was sinned and judged on earth,
Within the gates of hell sat Sin and Death,
In counterview within the gates, that now
Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame
Far into Chaos, since the fiend passed through,
Sin opening; who thus now to Death began.

"O son, why sit we here each other viewing
Idly, while Satan, our great author, thrives
In other worlds, and happier seat provides
For us, his offspring dear? It can not be
But that success attends him; if mishap,
Ere this he had returned, with fury driven
By his avengers, since no place like this
Can fit his punishment or their revenge.
Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
Wings growing, and dominion given me large
Beyond this deep; whatever draws me on,
Or sympathy, or some unnatural force,
Powerful at greatest distance to unite,
With secret amity, things of like kind,
By secretest conveyance. Thou my shade
Inseparable, must with me long:
For Death from Sin no power can separate.
But lest the difficulty of passing back
Stay his return perhaps over this gulf
Impassable, impervious, let us try
Adventurous work, yet to thy power and mine
Not unagreeable, to found a path
Over this main from hell to that new world,
Where Satan now prevails; a monument
Of merit high to all the infernal host,
Easing their passage hence, for intercourse,
Or transmigration, as their lot shall lead.
Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn
By this new felt attraction and instinct."

Whom thus the meagre shadow answered soon
"Go whither fate and inclination strong
Leads thee; I shall not lag behind, nor err
The way, thou leading; such a scent I draw
Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste
The savour of death from all things there that live;
Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest,
Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid."

So saying, with delight he snuffed the smell
Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock
Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,
Against the day of battle, to a field,
Where armies lie encamped, come flying, lured
With scent of living carcasses designed
For death, the following day, in bloody fight:
So scented the grim feature, and upturned
His nostril wide into the murky air,
Sagacious of his quarry from so far.
Then both from out hell gates into the waste
Wide anarchy of Chaos, damp and dark,
Flew diverse, and with power (their power was great)
Hovering upon the waters, what they met
Solid or slimy, as in raging sea
Tost up and down, together crowded drove
From each side shoaling towards the mouth of hell
As when two polar winds, blowing adverse
Upon the Cronian sea, together drive
Mountains of ice, that stop th' imagined way

Beyond Petsora eastward, to the rich
Cathaian coast. The aggregated soil
Death with his mace petrific, cold and dry,
As with a trident smote, and fixed as firm
As Delos, floating once; the rest his look
Bound with Gorgonian rigour not to move;
And with asphaltic slime, broad as the gate,
Deep to the roots of hell the gathered beach
They fastened, and the mole immense wrought on
Over the foaming deep high arched, a bridge
Of length prodigious, joining to the wall
Immoveable of this now fenceless world,
Forfeit to Death; from hence a passage broad,
Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to hell.
So, if great things to small may be compared,
Xerxes, the liberty of Greece to yoke,
From Susa, his Memnonian palace high,
Came to the sea, and, over Hellespont
Bridging his way, Europe with Asia joined,
And scourged with many a stroke the indignant waves.
Now had they brought the work by wondrous art
Pontifical, a ridge of pendent rock,
Over the vexed abyss, following the track
Of Satan to the self-same place where he
First lighted from his wing, and landed safe
From out of Chaos, to the outside bare
Of this round world: with pins of adamant
And chains they made all fast, too fast they made
And durable; and now in little space
The confines met of empyrean Heaven,
And of this world, and, on the left hand, hell
With long reach interposed; three several ways
In sight, to each of these three places led.
And now their way to earth they had descried,
To Paradise first tending, when, behold!
Satan, in likeness of an angel bright,
Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion steering
His zenith, while the sun in Aries rose:
Disguised he came; but those his children dear
Their parent soon discerned, though in disguise.
He, after Eve seduced, unminded slunk
Into the wood fast by, and, changing shape
To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act
By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded
Upon her husband, saw their shame that sought
Vain covertures; but when he saw descend
The Son of God to judge them, terrified
He fled; not hoping to escape, but shun
The present, fearing, guilty, what his wrath
Might suddenly inflict; that past, returned
By night, and listening where the hapless pair
Sat in their sad discourse, and various plaint,
Thence gathered his own doom, which understood
Not instant, but of future time, with joy
And tidings fraught, to hell he now returned;
And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhoped
Met, who to meet him came his offspring dear.
Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight
Of that stupendous bridge his joy increased.
Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair
Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broke.
"O parent, these are thy magnific deeds,
Thy trophies, which thou viewest as not thine own;
Thou art their author and prime architect:
For I no sooner in my heart divined;
My heart, which by a secret harmony
Still moves with thine, joined in connexion sweet,
That thou on earth had'st prospered, which thy looks
Now also evidence, but straight I felt,
Though distant from thee worlds between, yet felt,
That I must after thee, with this thy son;
Such fatal consequence unites us three!
Hell could no longer hold us in her bounds,
Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure
Detain from following thy illustrious track.
Thou hast achieved our liberty, confined
Within hell gates till now; thou us empowered
To fortify thus far, and overlay
With this portentous bridge the dark abyss.
Thine now is all this world; thy virtue hath won
What thy hands builded not, thy wisdom gained
With odds what war hath lost, and fully avenged
Our foil in Heaven; here thou shalt monarch reign,
There didst not; there let him still victor sway;
As battle hath adjudged; from this new world
Retiring, by his own doom alienated;
And henceforth monarchy with thee divide
Of all things, parted by th' empyreal bounds,
His quadrature, from thy orbicular world,
Or try thee now more dangerous to his throne."
Whom thus the prince of darkness answered glad,
"Fair daughter, and thou son and grandchild both,
High proof ye now have given to be the race
Of Satan (for I glory in the name,
Antagonist of Heaven's almighty King,)
Amply have merited of me, of all
Th' infernal empire, that so near Heaven's door
Triumphal with triumphal act have met,
Mine with this glorious work, and made one realm
Hell and this world, one realm, one continent
Of easy thoroughfare. Therefore, while I
Descend through darkness, on your road with ease,
To my associate powers, them to acquaint
With these successes, and with them rejoice;
You two this way, among these numerous orbs,
All yours right down to Paradise descend;
There dwell and reign in bliss; thence on the earth
Dominion exercise and in the air,

Chiefly on man, sole lord of all declared;
Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.
My substitutes I send ye, and create
Plenipotent on earth, of matchless might
Issuing from me: on your joint vigour now
My hold of this new kingdom all depends,
Through Sin to Death exposed by my exploit.
If your joint power prevail, th' affairs of hell
No detriment need fear; go, and be strong!"
So saying, he dismissed them; they with speed
Their course through thickest constellations held,
Spreading their bane; the blasted stars looked wan,
And planets, planet-struck, real eclipse
Then suffered. Th' other way Satan went down
The causey to hell gate: on either side
Disparted Chaos overbuilt exclaimed,
And with rebounding surge the bars assailed,
That scorned his indignation: through the gate,
Wide open and unguarded Satan passed,
And all about found desolate; for those
Appointed to sit there had left their charge,
Flown to the upper world; the rest were all
Far to the inland retired about the walls
Of Pandemonium, city and proud seat
Of Lucifer, so by allusion called
Of that bright star to Satan paragoned.
There kept their watch the legions, while the grand
In council sat, solicitous what chance
Might intercept their emperor sent; so he
Departing gave command, and they observed
As when the Tartar from his Russian foe,
By Astracan over the snowy plains
Retires, or Bactrian sophi, from the horns
Of Turkish crescent, leaves all waste beyond
The realm of Aladule, in his retreat
To Tauris or Casbeen: so these, the late
Heaven banished host, left desert utmost hell
Many a dark league, reduced in careful watch
Round their metropolis, and now expecting
Each hour their great adventurer, from the search
Of foreign worlds: he through the midst unmarked
In show plebeian angel militant
Of lowest order, passed; and from the door
Of that Plutonian hall, invisible
Ascends his high throne; which, under state
Of richest texture spread, at th' upper end
Was placed in regal lustre. Down awhile
He sat, and round about him saw unseen:
At last as from a cloud, his fulgent head
And shape star bright appeared, or brighter; clad
With what permissive glory since his fall
Was left him, or false glitter: all amazed
At that so sudden blaze, the Stygian throng
Bent their aspect, and whom they wished beheld,
Their mighty chief returned: loud was the acclaim:
Forth rushed in haste the great consulting peers,
Raised from their dark divan, and with like joy
Congratulant approached him, who with hand
Silence and with these words attention, won.

"Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers,
For in possession such not only of right,
I call ye, and declare ye now; returned,
Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth
Triumphant out of this infernal pit
Abominable, accursed, the house of wo,
And dungeon of our tyrant: now possess
As lords, a spacious world, to our native Heaven
Little inferior, by my adventure hard
With peril great achieved. Long were to tell
What I have done, what suffered, with what pain
Voyaged the unreal, vast, unbounded deep
Of horrible confusion, over which
By Sin and Death a broad way now is paved,
To expedite your glorious march; but I
Toiled out my uncouth passage, forced to ride
The untractable abyss, plunged in the womb
Of unoriginal night and Chaos wild,
That, jealous of their secrets fiercely opposed
My journey strange, with clamorous uproar
Protesting Fate supreme; thence how I found
The new created world, which fame in Heaven
Long had foretold, a fabric wonderful
Of absolute perfection; therein man
Placed in a Paradise, by our exile
Made happy: him by fraud I have seduced
From his Creator, and, the more to increase
Your wonder, with an apple; he, thereat
Offended, worth your laughter! hath given up
Both his beloved man and all his world,
To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us,
Without our hazard, labour, or alarm,
To range in, and to dwell, and over man
To rule, as over all he should have ruled.
True is, me also he hath judged, or rather
Me not, but the brute serpent in whose shape
Man I deceived: that which to me belongs
Is enmity, which he will put between
Me and mankind; I am to bruise his heel;
His seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head:
A world who would not purchase with a bruise,
Or much more grievous pain? Ye have the account
Of my performance; what remains, ye gods,
But up, and enter now into full bliss!"
So having said, awhile he stood, expecting
Their universal shout, and high applause,
To fill his ear; when, contrary, he hears
On all sides, from innumerable tongues,
A dismal universal hiss, the sound
Of public scorn; he wondered, but not long
Had leisure, wondering at himself now more
His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare;
His arms clung to his ribs; his legs intwining
Each other, till supplanted down he fell
A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
Reluctant, but in vain; a greater power
Now ruled him, punished in the shape he sinned,
According to his doom: he would have spoke,

But hiss for hiss returned with forked tongue
To forked tongue; for now were all transformed
Alike, to serpents all, as accessories
To this bold riot: dreadful was the din
Of hissing through the hall, thick swarming now
With complicated monsters head and tail,
Scorpion, and asp, and amphisbæna dire,
Cerastes horned, Hydrus and Elops drear,
And Dipsas (not so thick swarmed once the soil
Bedropt with blood of Gorgon, or the isle
Ophiusa,) but still greatest he the midst,
Now dragon grown, larger than whom the sun
Engendered in the Pythian vale on slime,
Huge Python, and his power no less he seemed
Above the rest still to retain; they all
Him followed, issuing forth to the open field,
Where all yet left of that revolted rout,
Heaven fallen, in station stood or just array,
Sublime with expectation when to see
In triumph issuing forth their glorious chief:
They saw, but other sight instead! a crowd
Of ugly serpents; horror on them fell,
And horrid sympathy; for what they saw
They felt themselves now changing; down their arms,
Down fell both spear and shield, down they as fast,
And the dire hiss renewed, and the dire form,
Catched by contagion, like in punishment,
As in their crime. Thus was the applause they meant,
Turned to exploding hiss, triumph to shame,
Cast on themselves from their own mouths. There stood
A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,
His will who reigns above, to aggravate
Their penance, laden with fair fruit, like that
Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve
Used by the tempter; on that prospect strange
Their earnest eyes they fixed, imagining
For one forbidden tree a multitude
Now risen, to work them further wo or shame;
Yet, parched with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,
Though to delude them sent, could not abstain;
But on they rolled in heaps, and, up the trees
Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky locks
That curled Megæra: greedily they plucked
The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew
Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flamed;
This more delusive, not the touch, but taste
Deceived; they, fondly thinking to allay
Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit
Chewed bitter ashes, which the offended taste
With spattering noise rejected: oft they assayed,
Hunger and thirst constraining; drugged as oft,
With hatefullest disrelish writhed their jaws,
With soot and cinders filled; so oft they fell
Into the same illusion, not as man
Whom they triumphed once lapsed. Thus were they plagued
And worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,
Till their lost shape, permitted, they resumed;
Yearly enjoined, some say, to undergo
This annual humbling certain numbered days,
To dash their pride, and joy for man seduced
However, some tradition they dispersed
Among the heathen of their purchase got,
And fabled how the serpent, whom they called
Ophion, with Eurynome, the wide
Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule
Of high Olympus, thence by Saturn driven
And Ops, ere yet Dictæan Jove was born.
Meanwhile in Paradise the hellish pair
Too soon arrived; Sin, there in power before,
Once actual, now in body, and to dwell
Habitual habitant; behind her Death,
Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet
On his pale horse: to whom Sin thus began.
"Second of Satan sprung, all-conquering Death!
What thinkest thou of our empire now, though earned
With travel difficult, not better far
Than still at hell's dark threshold t' have sat watch,
Unnamed, undreaded, and thyself half starved?"
Whom thus the sin-born monster answered soon:
"To me, who with eternal famine pine,
Alike is hell, or Paradise, or Heaven;
There best, where most with ravin I may meet;
Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems
To stuff this maw, this vast unhidebound corpse."
To whom the incestuous mother thus replied.
"Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits and flowers
Feed first; on each beast next, and fish, and fowl;
No homely morsels! and whatever thing
The scythe of Time mows down, devour unspared;
Till I, in man residing, through the race,
His thoughts, his looks, words, actions all infect,
And season him thy last and sweetest prey."
This said, they both betook them several ways,
Both to destroy, or unimmortal make
All kinds, and for destruction to mature
Sooner or later: which the Almighty seeing,
From his transcendent seat the saints among,
To those bright orders uttered thus his voice.
"See with what heat these dogs of hell advance
To waste and havoc yonder world, which I
So fair and good created, and had still
Kept in that state, had not the folly of man
Let in these wasteful furies, who impute
Folly to me; so doth the prince of hell
And his adherents, that with so much ease
I suffer them to enter and possess
A place so heavenly, and, conniving, seem
To gratify my scornful enemies,
That laugh, as if, transported with some fit
Of passion, I to them had quitted all,
At random yielded up to their misrule;
And know not that I called, and drew them thither,

My hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth
Which man's polluting sin with taint hath shed
On what was pure; till, crammed and gorged, nigh burst
With sucked and glutted offal, at one sling
Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,
Both Sin, and Death, and yawning grave, at last,
Through Chaos hurled, obstruct the mouth of hell
For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.
Then Heaven and earth renewed shall be made pure
To sanctity, that shall receive no stain:
Till then, the curse pronounced on both precedes."
He ended and the Heavenly audience loud
Sung hallelujah, as the sound of seas,
Through multitude that sung: "Just are thy ways,
Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;
Who can extenuate thee?" Next, to the Son,
"Destined Restorer of mankind, by whom
New Heaven and earth shall to the ages rise,
Or down from Heaven descend." Such was their song;
While the Creator, calling forth by name
His mighty angels, gave them several charge,
As sorted best with present things. The sun
Had first his precept so to move, so shine,
As might affect the earth with cold and heat
Scarce tolerable, and from the north to call
Decrepit winter, from the south to bring
Solstitial summer's heat. To the blank moon
Her office they prescribed; to th' other five
Their planetary motions and aspects,
In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite,
Of noxious efficacy, and when to join
In synod unbenign; and taught the fixed
Their influence malignant when to shower,
Which of them rising with the sun, or falling
Should prove tempestuous: to the winds they set
Their corners, when with bluster to confound
Sea, air, and shore; the thunder when to roll
With terror through the dark aerial hall.
Some say he bid his angels turn askance
The poles of earth twice ten degrees and more
From the sun's axle; they with labour pushed
Oblique the centric globe: some say the sun
Was bid turn reins from th' equinoctial road
Like distant breadth to Taurus with the seven
Atlantic Sisters, and the Spartan Twins,
Up to the Tropic Crab; thence down amain
By Leo, and the Virgin, and the Scales,
As deep as Capricorn, to bring in change
Of seasons to each clime; else had the spring
Perpetual smiled on earth with vernant flowers,
Equal in days and nights, except to those
Beyond the polar circles; to them day
Had unbenighted shone, while the low sun,
To recompense his distance, in their sight
Had rounded still the horizon, and not known
Or east or west; which had forbid the snow
From cold Estotiland, and south as far
Beneath Magellan. At that tasted fruit
The sun, as from Thyestian banquet, turned
His course intended; else, how had the world
Inhabited, though sinless, more than now,
Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?
These changes in the Heavens, though slow, produced
Like change on sea and land; sideral blast,
Vapour, and mist, and exhalation hot,
Corrupt and pestilent: now from the north
Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,
Bursting their brazen dungeon, armed with ice,
And snow, and hail, and stormy gust and flaw,
Boreas, and Cæcias, and Argestes loud,
And Thrascias, rend the woods, and seas upturn
With adverse blast upturns them from the south
Notus, and Afer black with thunderous clouds
From Serraliona; thwart of these, as fierce
Forth rush the Levant and Ponent winds,
Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise,
Sirocco, and Libecchio. Thus began
Outrage from lifeless things; but Discord first,
Daughter of Sin, among th' irrational
Death introduced, through fierce antipathy;
Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,
And fish with fish; to graze the herb all leaving,
Devoured each other; nor stood much in awe
Of man, but fled him, or, with countenance grim
Glared on him passing. These were from without
The growing miseries, which Adam saw
Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
To sorrow abandoned, but worse felt within;
And, in a troubled sea of passion tossed,
Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint.
"O miserable of happy! is this the end
Of this new glorious world, and me so late
The glory of that glory, who now become
Accursed of blessed! hide me from the face
Of God, whom to behold was then my height
Of happiness! yet well, if here would end
The misery; I deserved it, and would bear
My own deservings; but this will not serve:
All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,
Is propagated curse. O voice, once heard
Delightfully, *Increase and multiply*,
Now death to hear! for what can I increase
Or multiply, but curses on my head?
Who of all ages to succeed, but, feeling
The evil on him brought by me, will curse
My head? Ill fare our ancestor impure,
For this we may thank Adam! but his thanks
Shall be the execration: so, besides
Mine own that bide upon me, all from me
Shall with a fierce reflux on me rebound,
On me, as on their natural centre light
Heavy, though in their place. O fleeting joys
Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes!

Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
To mould me man? did I solicit thee
From darkness to promote me, or here place
In this delicious garden? as my will
Concurred not to my being, it were but right
And equal to reduce me to my dust;
Desirous to resign and render back
All I received; unable to perform
Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
The good I sought not. To the loss of that,
Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added
The sense of endless woes? inexplicable
Thy justice seems; yet, to say truth, too late
I thus contest; then should have been refused
Those terms, whatever, when they were proposed:
Thou didst accept them; wilt thou enjoy the good,
Then cavil the conditions? and, though God
Made thee without thy leave, what if thy son
Prove disobedient, and, reproved, retort,
'Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not.'
Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee
That proud excuse? yet him not thy election,
But natural necessity, begot.
God made thee of choice his own, and of his own
To serve him; thy reward was of his grace,
Thy punishment then justly is at his will.
Be it so, for I submit; his doom is fair,
That dust I am, and shall to dust return:
O welcome hour whenever! why delays
His hand to execute what his decree
Fixed on this day? who do I overlive?
Why am I mocked with death, and lengthened out
To deathless pain? how gladly would I meet
Mortality my sentence, and be earth
Insensible! how glad would lay me down
As in my mother's lap! there I should rest
And sleep secure; his dreadful voice no more
Would thunder in my ears; no fear of worse
To me and to my offspring would torment me
With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt
Pursues me still, lest all I can not die;
Lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of man
Which God inspired can not together perish
With this corporeal clod; then in the grave,
Or in some other dismal place, who knows
But I shall die a living death? O thought
Horrid, if true! yet why? it was but breath
Of life that sinned; what dies but what had life
And sin? the body properly hath neither.
All of me then shall die: let this appease
The doubt, since human reach no further knows.
For though the Lord of all be infinite,
Is his wrath also? be it, man is not so,
But mortal doomed. How can he exercise
Wrath without end on man, whom death must end?
Can he make deathless death? that were to make
Strange contradiction, which to God himself
Impossible is held, as argument
Of weakness, not of power. Will he draw out,
For anger's sake, finite to infinite
In punished man, to satisfy his rigour,
Satisfied never? that were to extend
His sentence beyond dust and nature's law,
By which all causes else, according still
To the reception of their matter, act,
Not to the extent of their own sphere. But say
That death be not one stroke, as I supposed,
Bereaving sense, but endless misery
From this day onward, which I feel begun
Both in me, and without me, and so last
To perpetuity; ay me! that fear
Comes thundering back with dreadful revolution
On my defenceless head; both death and I
Am found eternal, and incorporate both;
Nor I on my part single; in me all
Posterity stands cursed: fair patrimony
That I must leave ye, sons! O were I able
To waste it all myself, and leave ye none!
So disinherited, how would ye bless
Me, now your curse! Ah, why should all mankind
For one man's fault, thus guiltless be condemned,
If guiltless? But from me what can proceed,
But all corrupt; both mind and will depraved,
Not to do only, but to will the same
With me? how can they then acquitted stand
In sight of God? Him, after all disputes,
Forced I absolve: all my evasions vain,
And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me still
But to my own conviction: first and last
On me, me only, as the source and spring
Of all corruption, all the blame lights due.
So might the wrath! Fond wish! couldst thou support
That burden, heavier than the earth to bear;
Than all the world much heavier, though divided
With that bad woman? Thus, what thou desirest,
And what thou fear'st, alike destroys all hope
Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable
Beyond all past example and future;
To Satan only like both crime and doom.
O conscience! into what abyss of fears
And horrors hast thou driven me; out of which
I find no way, from deep to deeper plunged!"
Thus Adam to himself lamented loud
Through the still night, not now, as ere man fell
Wholesome, and cool, and mild, but with black air
Accompanied; with damps and dreadful gloom;
Which to his evil conscience represented
All things with double terror: on the ground
Outstretched he lay, on the cold ground, and oft
Cursed his creation; death as oft accused
Of tardy execution, since denounced
The day of his offence. "Why comes not death,"
Said he, "with one thrice-acceptable stroke

To end me? shall truth fail to keep her word,
Justice divine not hasten to be just?
But Death comes not at call, Justice divine
Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries.
O woods, O fountains, hillocks, dales, and bowers
With other echo late I taught your shades
To answer, and resound far other song."
Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,
Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,
Soft words to his fierce passion she assayed:
But her with stern regard he thus repelled.
"Out of my sight, thou serpent! that name best
Befits thee with him leagued, thyself as false
And hateful; nothing wants, but that thy shape,
Like his, and colour serpentine, may show
Thy inward fraud, to warn all creatures from thee
Henceforth; lest that too heavenly form, pretended
To hellish falsehood, snare them. But for thee
I had persisted happy; had not thy pride,
And wandering vanity, when least was safe,
Rejected my forewarning, and disdained
Not to be trusted; longing to be seen,
Though by the devil himself; him overweening
To overreach; but with the serpent meeting,
Fooled and beguiled; by him thou, I by thee,
To trust thee from my side, imagined wise,
Constant, mature, proof against all assaults,
And understood not all was but a show
Rather than solid virtue; all but a rib
Crooked, by nature, bent, as now appears,
More to the part sinister, from me drawn;
Well if thrown out, as supernumerary
To my just number found. O! why did God,
Creator wise, that peopled highest Heaven
With spirits masculine, create at last
This novelty on earth, this fair defect
Of nature, and not fill the world at once
With men, as angels, without feminine,
Or find some other way to generate
Mankind? This mischief had not then befallen,
And more that shall befall; innumerable
Disturbances on earth through female snares,
And straight conjunction with this sex: for either
He never shall find out fit mate, but such
As some misfortune brings him, or mistake;
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain
Through her perverseness, but shall see her gained
By a far worse; or, if she love, withheld
By parents; or his happiest choice too late
Shall meet, already linked and wedlock-bound
To a fell adversary, his hate or shame:
Which infinite calumny shall cause
To human life, and household peace confound."
He added not, and from her turned; but Eve,
Not so repulsed, with tears that ceased not flowing,
And tresses all disordered, at his feet,
Fell humble; and, embracing them, besought
His peace and thus proceeded in her plaint.

"Forsake me not thus, Adam! witness Heaven
What love sincere, and reverence in my heart
I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,
Unhappily deceived! thy suppliant
I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,
Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,
Thy counsel in this uttermost distress,
My only strength and stay: forlorn of thee,
Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?
While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
Between us two let there be peace, both joining,
As joined in injuries, one enmity
Against a foe by doom express assigned us,
That cruel serpent: on me exercise not
Thy hatred for this misery befallen:
On me already lost, me than thyself
More miserable; both have sinned; but thou
Against God only, I against God and thee;
And to the place of judgment will return,
There with my cries importune Heaven, that all
The sentence, from thy head removed, may light
On me, sole cause to thee of all this wo,
Me, me only, just object of his ire!"
She ended weeping; and her lowly plight,
Immoveable, till peace obtained from fault
Acknowledged and deplored, in Adam wrought
Commiseration: soon his heart relented
Towards her, his life so late and sole delight,
Now at his feet submissive in distress;
Creature so fair his reconcilement seeking,
His counsel, whom she had displeased, his aid:
As one disarmed, his anger all he lost,
And thus with peaceful words upraised her soon.
"Unwary, and too desirous, as before,
So now of what thou know'st not, who desir'st
The punishment all on thyself; alas!
Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain
His full wrath, whose thou feel'st as yet least part,
And my displeasure bear'st so ill. If prayer
Could altar high decrees, I to that place
Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,
That on my head all might be visited;
Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiven,
To me committed, and by me exposed.
But rise; let us no more contend, nor blame,
Each other, blamed enough elsewhere; but strive
In offices of love, how we may lighten
Each other's burden, in our share of wo;
Since this day's death denounced, if ought I see,
Will prove no sudden, but a slow paced evil,
A long day's dying, to augment our pain,
And to our seed (O hapless seed!) derived."
To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, replied
"Adam, by sad experiment I know
How little weight my words with thee can find,
Found so erroneous; thence, by just event,
Found so unfortunate; nevertheless,
Restored by thee, vile as I am, to place

Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain
Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart
Living or dying, from thee I will not hide
What thoughts in my unquiet breast are risen,
Tending to some relief of our extremes,
Or end; though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,
As in our evils, and of easier choice.
If care of our descent perplex us most,
Which must be born to certain wo, devoured
By Death at last; and miserable it is
To be to others cause of misery,
Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring
Into this cursed world a woful race,
That after wretched life must be at last
Food for so foul a monster; in thy power
It lies, yet ere conception to prevent
The race unblest, to being yet unbegot.
Childless thou art, childless remain: so Death
Shall be deceived his glut, and with us two
Be forced to satisfy his ravenous maw.
But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain
From love's due rites, nuptial embraces sweet;
And with desire to languish without hope,
Before the present object languishing
With like desire; which would be misery
And torment less than none of what we dread;
Then both ourselves and seed at once to free
From what we fear for both, let us make short,
Let us seek Death, or, he not found, supply
With our own hands his office on ourselves;
Why stand we longer shivering under fears,
That show no end but death, and have the power,
Of many ways to die the shortest choosing,
Destruction with destruction to destroy?"

She ended here, or vehement despair
Broke off the rest; so much of death her thoughts
Had entertained, as dyed her cheeks with pale.
But Adam, with such counsel nothing swayed,
To better hopes his more attentive mind
Labouring had raised, and thus to Eve replied.

"Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems
To argue in thee something more sublime
And excellent, than what thy mind contemns:
But self-destruction therefore sought, refutes
That excellence thought in thee, and implies.
Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret
For loss of life and pleasure overloved.
Or if thou covet death, as utmost end
Of misery, so thinking to evade
The penalty pronounced; doubt not but God
Hath wiselier armed his vengeful ire, than so
To be forestalled; much more I fear lest death,
So snatched, will not exempt us from the pain
We are by doom to pay; rather such acts
Of contumacy will provoke the Highest
To make death in us live: then let us seek
Some safer resolution, which methinks
I have in view, calling to mind with heed
Part of our sentence, that thy seed shall bruise
The serpent's head; piteous amends! unless
Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe,
Satan, who, in the serpent, hath contrived
Against us this deceit: to crush his head
Would be revenge indeed! which will be lost
By death brought on ourselves, or childless days
Resolved, as thou proposest; so our foe
Shall 'scape his punishment ordained, and we
Instead shall double ours upon our heads.
No more be mentioned then of violence
Against ourselves, and wilful barrenness,
That cuts us off from hope, and savours only
Rancour and pride, impatience and despite,
Reluctance against God and his just yoke
Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild
And gracious temper he both heard and judged
Without wrath or reviling; we expected
Immediate dissolution, which we thought
Was meant by death that day; when lo, to thee
Pains only in child-bearing were foretold,
And bringing forth; soon recompensed with joy
Fruit of thy womb: on me the curse aslope
Glanced on the ground: with labour I must earn
My bread; what harm? Idleness had been worse;
My labour will sustain me; and, lest cold
Or heat should injure us, his timely care
Hath, unbesought, provided, and his hands
Clothed us unworthy, pitying while he judged;
How much more, if we pray him, will his ear
Be open, and his heart to pity incline,
And teach us further by what means to shun
Th' inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail, and snow!
Which now the sky with various face begins
To show us in this mountain, while the winds
Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks
Of these fair spreading trees: which bids us seek
Some better shroud, some better warmth to cherish
Our limbs benumbed, ere this diurnal star
Leave cold the night, how we his gathered beams
Reflected may with matter sere foment;
Or, by collision of two bodies grind
The air attrite to fire: as late the clouds
Justling or pushed with winds, rude in their shock
Tine the slant lightning; whose thwart flame, driven down
Kindles the gummy bark of fir or pine
And sends a comfortable heat from far,
Which might supply the sun: such fire to use,
And what may else be remedy or cure
To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought,
He will instruct us praying, and of grace
Beseeching him, so as we need not fear
To pass commodiously this life, sustained
By him with many comforts, till we end
In dust, our final rest and native home.
What better can we do, than to the place
Repairing where he judged us, prostrate fall
Before him reverent; and there confess

Humbly our faults, and pardon beg; with tears
Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek?
Undoubtedly he will relent and turn
From his displeasure; in whose look serene,
When angry most he seemed and most severe,
What else but favour, grace, and mercy shone?"

So spake our father penitent, nor Eve
Felt less remorse; they, forthwith to the place
Repairing where he judged them, prostrate fell
Before him reverent; and both confessed
Humbly their faults, and pardon begged with tears
Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek.

BOOK XI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Son of God presents to his Father the prayers of our first parents now repenting, and intercedes for them; God accepts them, but declares that they must no longer abide in Paradise; sends Michael with a band of cherubim to dispossess them; but first to reveal to Adam future things: Michael's coming down. Adam shows to Eve certain ominous signs; he discerns Michael's approach; goes out to meet him; the angel denounces their departure. Eve's lamentation. Adam pleads, but submits: the angel leads him up to a high hill; sets before him in vision what shall happen till the flood.

Thus they, in lowliest plight, repentant stood
Praying; for from the mercy-seat above
Prevenient grace descended had removed
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
Regenerate grow instead, that sighs now breathed
Unutterable; which the Spirit of prayer
Inspired, and winged for Heaven with speedier flight
Than loudest oratory: yet their sport
Not of mean suitors, nor important less
Seemed their petition, than when the ancient pair
In fables old, less ancient yet than these,
Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore
The race of mankind drowned, before the shrine
Of Themis stood devout. To Heaven their prayers
Flew up, nor missed the way, by envious winds
Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they passed
Dimensionless through heavenly doors; then, clad
With incense, where the golden altar fumed,
By their great Intercessor, came in sight
Before the Father's throne: them the glad Son
Presenting, thus to intercede began:

"See, Father, what first fruits on earth are sprung
From thy implanted grace in man, these sighs
And prayers, which in this golden censer mixed
With incense, I thy priest before thee bring:
Fruits of more pleasing savour from thy seed
Sown with contrition in his heart than those
Which, his own hand manuring, all the trees
Of Paradise could have produced, ere fallen
From innocence. Now therefore bend thine ear
To supplication; hear his sighs, though mute;
Unskilful with what words to pray, let me
Interpret for him, me, his advocate
And propitiation; all his works on me,
Good or not good, ingraft; my merit those
Shall perfect, and for these my death shall pay.
Accept me; and in me, from these receive
The smell of peace toward mankind: let him live
Before thee reconciled, at least his days
Numbered, though sad, till death, his doom, (which I
To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse,)
To better life shall yield him; where with me
All my redeemed may dwell in joy and bliss;
Made one with me as I with thee am one."

To whom the Father, without cloud, serene:
"All thy request for man, accepted Son,
Obtain; all thy request was my decree:
But longer in that Paradise to dwell,
The law I gave to nature him forbids:
Those pure immortal elements, that know
No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,
Eject him, tainted now; and purge him off
As a distemper, gross, to air as gross,
And mortal food; as may dispose him best
For dissolution wrought by sin, that first
Distempered all things, and of incorrupt
Corrupted. I, at first, with two fair gifts
Created him endowed; with happiness
And immortality: that fondly lost,
This other served but to eternize wo,
Till I provided death: so death becomes
His final remedy; and, after life
Tried in sharp tribulation, and refined
By faith and faithful works, to second life,
Waked in the renovatian of the just,
Resigns him up with Heaven and earth renewed.
But let us call to synod all the blest
Through Heaven's wide bounds; from them I will not hide
My judgments; how with mankind I proceed,
As how with peccant angels late they saw,
And in their state, though firm, stood more confirmed."

He ended, and the Son gave signal high
To the bright minister that watched; he blew
His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps
When God descended, and perhaps once more
To sound at general doom. The angelic blast
Filled all the regions; from their blissful bowers
Of amaranthine shade, fountain or spring,
By the waters of life, where'er they sat
In fellowships of joy, the sons of light
Hasted, resorting to the summons high
And took their seats; till from his throne supreme
Th' Almighty thus pronounced his sovereign will.

"O sons, like one of us man is become
To know both good and evil, since his taste
Of that defended fruit; but let him boast
His knowledge of good lost, and evil got;
Happier! had it sufficed him to have known
Good by itself, and evil not at all.
He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite,
My motions in him; longer than they move,
His heart I know, how variable and vain,
Self-left. Lest therefore his now bolder hand
Reach also of the tree of life, and eat,
And live for ever, dream at least to live
For ever, to remove him I decree,
And send him from the garden forth to till
The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil.
Michael, this my behest have thou in charge;
Take to thee from among the cherubim
Thy choice of flaming warriors, lest the fiend,
Or in behalf of man, or to invade
Vacant possession, some new trouble raise:
Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God
Without revenge drive out the sinful pair;
From hallowed ground the unholy; and denounce
To them, and to their progeny, from thence
Perpetual banishment. Yet, lest they faint
At the sad sentence rigorously urged,
For I behold them softened and with tears
Bewailing their excess, all terror hide.
If patiently thy bidding they obey,
Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal
To Adam what shall come in future days,
As I shall thee enlighten; intermix
My covenant in the woman's seed renewed,
So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace
And, on the east side of the garden, place,
Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,
Cherubic watch; and of a sword the flame
Wide-waving; all approach far off to fright,
And guard all passage to the tree of life;
Lest Paradise a receptacle prove
To spirits foul, and all my trees their prey,
With whose stolen fruit man once more to delude."
He ceased; and the archangelic power prepared
For swift descent; with him the cohort bright
Of watchful cherubim: four faces each
Had, like a double Janus; all their shape
Spangled with eyes, more numerous than those
Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse,
Charmed with Arcadian pipe, the pastoral reed
Of Hermus, or his opiate rod. Meanwhile,
To resalute the world with sacred light,
Leucothea waked, and with fresh dews embalmed
The earth; when Adam and first matron Eve
Had ended now their orisons, and found
Strength added from above, new hope to spring
Out of despair; joy, but with fear yet linked;
Which thus to Eve his welcome words renewed.
"Eve, easily may faith admit, that all
The good which we enjoy from Heaven descends;
But that from us aught should ascend to Heaven
So prevalent as to concern the mind
Of God high-blest, or to incline his will,
Hard to belief may seem; yet this will prayer,
Or one short sigh of human breath, upborne
Even to the seat of God. For since I sought
By prayer the offended Deity to appease,
Kneeled, and before him humbled all my heart,
Methought I saw him placable and mild,
Bending his ear; persuasion in me grew
That I was heard with favour; peace returned
Home to my breast, and to my memory
His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our foe:
Which, then not minded in dismay, yet now
Assures me that the bitterness of death
Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee,
Eve rightly called, mother of all mankind,
Mother of all things living, since by thee
Man is to live, and all things live for man."
To whom thus Eve with sad demeanour meek.
"Ill worthy I such title should belong
To me transgressor, who, for thee ordained
A help, became thy snare; to me reproach
Rather belongs, distrust, and all dispraise:
But infinite in pardon was my Judge,
That I, who first brought death on all, am graced
The source of life; next unfavourable thou,
Who highly thus to entitle me vouchsaf'st
Far other name deserving. But the field
To labour calls us, now with sweat imposed,
Though after sleepless night; for see! the morn,
All unconcerned with our unrest, begins
Her rosy progress smiling; let us forth;
I never from thy side henceforth to stray.
Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoined
Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,
What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?
Here let us live, though in fallen state, content."
So spake, so wished much humbled Eve; but fate
Subscribed not; Nature first gave signs, impressed
On bird, beast, air; air suddenly eclipsed
After short blush of morn; nigh in her sight
The bird of Jove, stooped from his aery tour,
Two birds of gayest plume before him drove;
Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,
First hunter then, pursued a gentle brace,
Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind;
Direct to the eastern gate was bent their flight.
Adam observed, and, with his eye the chase
Pursuing, not unmoved, to Eve thus spake.
"O Eve, some further change awaits us nigh,
Which Heaven, by these mute signs in nature shows
Forerunners of his purpose; or to warn
Us, haply too secure, of our discharge
From penalty, because from death released
Some days: how long, and what till then our life,

Who knows? or more than this, that we are dust,
And thither must return, and be no more?
Why else this double object in our sight
Of flight pursued in the air, and o'er the ground,
One way the self-same hour? why in the east
Darkness ere day's mid course, and morning light
More orient in yon western cloud, that draws
O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,
And slow descends, with something Heavenly fraught?"
He erred not; for by this the heavenly bands
Down from a sky of jasper lighted now
In Paradise, and on a hill made halt:
A glorious apparition, had not doubt
And carnal fear that day dimmed Adam's eye.
Not that more glorious, when the angels met
Jacob in Mahanaim, where he saw
The field pavilioned with his guardians bright;
Nor that, which on the flaming mount appeared
In Dothan, covered with a camp of fire,
Against the Syrian king, who to surprise
One man, assassin-like, had levied war,
War unproclaimed. The princely Hierarch
In their bright stand there left his powers, to seize
Possession of the garden; he alone,
To find where Adam sheltered, took his way,
Not unperceived of Adam; who to Eve,
While the great visitant approached, thus spake.
"Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps,
Of us will soon determine, or impose
New laws to be observed; for I descry,
From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,
One of the Heavenly host, and, by his gait,
None of the meanest; some great potentate,
Or of the thrones above, such majesty
Invests him coming! yet not terrible,
That I should fear, nor sociably mild,
As Raphael, that I should much confide;
But solemn and sublime, whom not to offend,
With reverence I must meet, and thou retire."
He ended; and the archangel soon drew nigh,
Not in his shape celestial, but as man
Clad to meet man; over his lucid arms
A military vest of purple flowed,
Livelier than Melibœan, or the grain
Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old
In time of truce; Iris had dipped the woof;
His starry helm unbuckled showed him prime
In manhood where youth ended; by his side,
As in a glistering zodiac hung the sword,
Satan's dire dread, and in his hand the spear.
Adam bowed low; he, kingly, from his state
Inclined not, but his coming thus declared.
"Adam, Heaven's high behest no preface needs:
Sufficient that thy prayers are heard; and Death,
Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,
Defeated of his seizure many days
Given thee of grace; wherein thou may'st repent,
And one bad act with many deeds well done
May'st cover: well may then thy Lord, appeased,
Redeem thee quite from Death's rapacious claim;
But longer in this Paradise to dwell
Permits not; to remove thee I am come,
And send thee from the garden forth to till
The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil.'
He added not, for Adam at the news
Heart-struck with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,
That all his senses bound: Eve, who unseen,
Yet all had heard, with audible lament
Discovered soon the place of her retire.
"O unexpected stroke, worse than of death!
Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? thus leave
Thee, native soil, these happy walks and shades,
Fit haunt of gods? where I had hope to spend,
Quiet though sad, the respite of that day
That must be mortal to us both. O flowers,
That never will in other climate grow,
My early visitation, and my last
At even, which I bred up with tender hand
From the first opening bud, and gave ye names!
Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank
Your tribes, and water from th' ambrosial fount?
Thee, lastly, nuptial bower, by me adorned
With what to sight or smell was sweet! from thee
How shall I part, and whither wander down
Into a lower world, to this obscure
And wild? how shall we breathe in other air
Less pure, accustomed to immortal fruits?"
Whom thus the angel interrupted mild.
"Lament not, Eve, but patiently resign
What justly thou hast lost; nor set thy heart,
Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine:
Thy going is not lonely; with thee goes
Thy husband; him to follow thou art bound:
Where he abides, think there thy native soil."
Adam, by this from the cold sudden damp
Recovering, and his scattered spirits returned,
To Michael thus his humble words addressed.
"Celestial, whether among the thrones, or named
Of them the highest, for such of shape may seem
Prince above princes! gently hast thou told
Thy message, which might else in telling wound,
And in performing end us; what besides
Of sorrow, and dejection, and despair
Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring
Departure from this happy place, our sweet
Recess, and only consolation left
Familiar to our eyes! all happy else
Inhospitable appear, and desolate,
Nor knowing us, nor known: and, if by prayer
Incessant I could hope to change the will
Of Him who all things can, I would not cease
To weary him with my assiduous cries:
But prayer against his absolute decree
No more avails than breath against the wind,
Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth
Therefore to his great bidding I submit,
This most afflicts me, that, departing hence,

As from his face I shall be hid, deprived
His blessed countenance: here I could frequent
With worship place by place where he vouchsafed
Presence divine; and to my sons relate,
'On this mount he appeared; under this tree
Stood visible; among these pines his voice
I heard; here with him at this fountain talked:
So many grateful altars I would rear
Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone
Of lustre from the brook, in memory,
Or monument to ages; and thereon
Offer sweet-smelling gums, and fruits, and flowers:
In yonder nether world where shall I seek
His bright appearances, or footstep trace?
For though I fled him angry, yet, recalled
To life prolonged and promised race, I now
Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts
Of glory; and far off his steps adore."

To whom thus Michael with regard benign.
"Adam, thou knowest Heaven his, and all the earth;
Not this rock only; his omnipresence fills
Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,
Fomented by his virtual power and warmed:
All the earth he gave thee to possess and rule,
No despicable gift; surmise not then
His presence to these narrow bounds confined
Of Paradise or Eden: this had been
Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread
All generations, and had hither come
From all the ends of the earth, to celebrate
And reverence thee, their great progenitor.
But this pre-eminence thou hast lost, brought down
To dwell on even ground now with thy sons:
Yet doubt not but in valley, and in plain,
God is, as here; and will found alike
Present; and of his presence many a sign
Still following thee, still compassing thee round
With goodness and paternal love, his face
Express, and of his steps the tract divine.
Which that thou may'st believe, and be confirmed
Ere thou from hence depart; know I am sent
To show thee what shall come in future days
To thee and to thy offspring; good with bad
Expect to hear; supernal grace contending
With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn
True patience, and to temper joy with fear
And pious sorrow; equally inured
By moderation either state to bear,
Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead
Safest thy life, and best prepared endure
Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend
This hill; let Eve (for I have drenched her eyes)
Here sleep below while thou to foresight wak'st;
As once thou slept'st, while she to life was formed."

To whom thus Adam gratefully replied.

"Ascend, I follow thee, safe guide, the path
Thou lead'st me; and to the hand of Heaven submit,
However chastening; to the evil turn
My obvious breast; arming to overcome
By suffering, and earn rest from labour won,
If so I may attain." So both ascend
In the visions of God: It was a hill,
Of Paradise the highest, from whose top
The hemisphere of earth, in clearest ken,
Stretched out to the amplest reach of prospect lay
Not higher that hill, nor wider looking round,
Whereon, for different cause, the tempter set
Our second Adam, in the wilderness,
To show him all earth's kingdoms, and their glory.
His eye might there command wherever stood
City of old or modern fame, the seat
Of mightiest empire, from the destined walls
Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can,
And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne,
To Paquin of Sinæan kings; and thence
To Agra and Lahor of great Mogul,
Down to the golden Chersonese; or where
The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since
In Hispahan; or where the Russian ksar
In Mosco; or the sultan in Bizance,
Turchestan-born; nor could his eye not ken
The empire of Negus to his utmost port
Ercoco, and the less maritime kings,
Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,
And Sofala, thought Ophir, to the realm
Of Congo, and Angola farthest south;
Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount
The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez, and Sus,
Morocco, and Algiers, and Tremisen;
On Europe thence, and where Rome was to swa
The world: in spirit perhaps he also saw
Rich Mexico, the seat of Montezume,
And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat
Of Atabalipa; and yet unspoiled
Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons
Call El Dorado. But to nobler sights
Michael from Adam's eyes the film removed,
Which that false fruit that promised clearer sight
Had bred; then purged with euphrasy and rue
The visual nerve, for he had much to see;
And from the well of life three drops instilled.
So deep the power of these ingredients pierced,
Even to the inmost seat of mental sight,
That Adam now enforced to close his eyes,
Sunk down, and all his spirits became entranced;
But him the gentle angel by the hand
Soon raised, and his attention thus recalled.

"Adam, now ope thine eyes: and first behold
The effects which thy original crime hath wrought
In some to spring from thee; who never touched
The excepted tree; nor with the snake conspired;
Nor sinned thy sin; yet from that sin derive
Corruption, to bring forth more violent deeds."

His eyes he opened, and beheld a field,
Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves
New reaped, the other part sheep-walks and folds;
I' th' midst an altar as the land-mark stood,
Rustic, of grassy sord; thither anon
A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought
First fruits, the green ear, and the yellow sheaf,
Unculled, as came to hand; a shepherd next,
More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock
Choicest and best; then, sacrificing, laid
The inwards and their fat, with incense strowed,
On the cleft wood, and all due rites performed.
His offering soon propitious fire from Heaven
Consumed with nimble glance, and grateful steam;
The other's not, for his was not sincere:
Whereat he inly raged, and, as they talked,
Smote him into the midriff with a stone
That beat out life; he fell; and, deadly pale,
Groaned out his soul with gushing flood effused.
Much at that sight was Adam in his heart
Dismayed, and thus in haste to th' angel cried.
"O teacher, some great mischief hath befallen
To that meek man who well had sacrificed;
Is piety thus and pure devotion paid?"
To whom Michael thus, he also moved, replied.
"These two are brethren, Adam, and to come
Out of thy loins; th' unjust the just hath slain,
For envy that his brother's offering found
From Heaven acceptance; but the bloody fact
Will be avenged; and the other's faith approved,
Lose no reward; though here thou see him die,
Rolling in dust and gore." To which our sire:
"Alas! both for the deed and for the cause!
But have I now seen Death? Is this the way
I must return to native dust? O sight
Of terror, foul and ugly to behold,
Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!"
To whom thus Michael. "Death thou hast seen
In his first shape on man; but many shapes
Of Death, and many are the ways that lead
To his grim cave, all dismal; yet to sense
More terrible at th' entrance than within.
Some, as thou sawest, by violent stroke shall die;
By fire, flood, famine, by intemperance more
In meats and drinks, which on the earth shall bring
Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew
Before thee shall appear; that thou mayest know
What misery the inabstinence of Eve
Shall bring on men." Immediately a place
Before his eyes appeared, sad, noisome, dark
A lazar-house it seemed; wherein were laid
Numbers of all diseased; all maladies
Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,
Demoniac phrenzy moping melancholy,
And moonstruck madness, pining atrophy,
Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,
Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint racking rheums
Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair
Tended the sick busiest from couch to couch;
And over them triumphant Death his dart
Shook, but delayed to strike, though oft invoked
With vows, as their chief good, and final hope
Sight so deform what heart of rock could long
Dry-eyed behold? Adam could not, but wept,
Though not of woman born; compassion quelled
His best of man, and gave him up to tears
A space, till firmer thoughts restrained excess;
And, scarce recovering words, his plaint renewed
"O miserable mankind, to what fall
Degraded, to what wretched state reserved!
Better end here unborn. Why is life given
To be thus wrested from us? rather, why
Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew
What we receive, would either not accept
Life offered, or soon beg to lay it down;
Glad to be so dismissed in peace. Can thus
The image of God in man, created once
So goodly and erect, though faulty since,
To such unsightly sufferings be debased
Under inhuman pains? Why should not man
Retaining still divine similitude
In part, from such deformities be free,
And, for his Maker's image sake, exempt?"
"Their Maker's image," answered Michael, "then
Forsook them, when themselves they vilified
To serve ungoverned appetite, and took
His image whom they served, a brutish vice,
Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.
Therefore so abject is their punishment.
Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own;
Or if his likeness, by themselves defaced;
While they pervert pure nature's healthful rules
To loathsome sickness; worthily, since they
God's image did not reverence in themselves."
"I yield it just," said Adam, "and submit.
But is there yet no other way, besides
These painful passages, how we may come
To death, and mix with our connatural dust?"
"There is," said Michael, "if thou well observe
The rule of *Not too much;* by temperance taught,
In what thou eat'st and drink'st; seeking from thence
Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,
Till many years over thy head return:
So may'st thou live, till, like ripe fruit, thou drop
Into thy mother's lap; or be with ease
Gathered, not harshly plucked, for death mature:
This is old age; but then thou must outlive
Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty; which will change
To withered, weak, and gray; thy senses then

Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forego,
To what thou hast; and, for the air of youth,
Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign
A melancholy damp of cold and dry
To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume
The balm of life." To whom our ancestor.
"Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong
Life much; bent rather how I may be quit
Fairest and easiest of this cumbrous charge;
Which I must keep till my appointed day
Of rendering up, and patiently attend
My dissolution." Michael replied.
"Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou liv'st
Live well; how long or short, permit to Heaven:
And now prepare thee for another sight."
He looked, and saw a spacious plain, whereon
Were tents of various hue; by some, were herds
Of cattle grazing; others, whence the sound
Of instruments that made melodious chime
Was heard, of harp and organ; and, who moved
Their stops and chords, was seen; his volant touch,
Instinct through all proportions, low and high,
Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.
In other part stood one who, at the forge
Labouring, two massy clods of iron and brass
Had melted, (whether found where casual fire
Had wasted woods on mountain or in vale,
Down to the veins of earth; thence gliding hot
To some cave's mouth; or whether wash'd by stream
From under ground;) the liquid ore he drained
Into fit moulds prepared; from which he formed
First his own tools; then, what might else be wrought
Fusil or graven in metal. After these,
But on the hither side, a different sort
From the high neighbouring hills, which was their seat,
Down to the plain descended: by their guise
Just men they seemed, and all their study bent
To worship God aright, and know his works
Not hid; nor those things last which might preserve
Freedom and peace to men: they on the plain
Long had not walked, when from the tents, behold!
A bevy of fair women, richly gay
In gems and wanton dress; to the harp they sung
Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on:
The men, though grave, eyed them, and let their eyes
Rove without rein; till in the amorous net
Fast caught, they liked; and each his liking chose;
And now of love they treat, till the evening star,
Love's harbinger, appeared; then, all in heat
They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke
Hymen, then first to marriage rites invoked:
With feast and music all the tents resound.
Such happy interview, and fair event
Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flowers,
And charming symphonies, attached the heart
Of Adam, soon inclined to admit delight,
The bent of nature; which he thus expressed.
"True opener of mine eyes, prime angel blest,
Much better seems this vision, and more hope
Of peaceful days portends, than those two past;
Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse;
Here nature seems fulfilled in all her ends."
To whom thus Michael. "Judge not what is best
By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet;
Created, as thou art, to nobler end,
Holy and pure, conformity divine.
Those tents thou saw'st so pleasant, were the tents
Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race
Who slew his brother; studious they appear
Of arts that polish life, inventors rare;
Unmindful of their Maker, though his spirit
Taught them; but they his gifts acknowledged none.
Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget,
For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seemed
Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,
Yet empty of all good wherein consists
Woman's domestic honour and chief praise;
Bred only and completed to the taste
Of lustful appetance, to sing, to dance,
To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye:
To these that sober race of men, whose lives
Religious titled them the sons of God,
Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame
Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles
Of these fair atheists; and now swim in joy,
Ere long to swim at large; and laugh, for which
The world ere long a world of tears must weep."
To whom thus Adam, of short joy bereft.
"O pity and shame, that they, who to live well
Entered so fair, should turn aside to tread
Paths indirect, or in the mid way faint!
But still I see the tenor of man's wo
Holds on the same, from woman to begin."
"From man's effeminate slackness it begins,"
Said the angel, "who should better hold his place
By wisdom, and superior gifts received.
But now prepare thee for another scene.
He looked, and saw wide territory spread
Before him, towns, and rural works between
Cities of men with lofty gates and towers,
Concourse in arms, fierce faces threatening war,
Giants of mighty bone, and bold emprise;
Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,
Single, or in array of battle ranged,
Both horse and foot, nor idly mustering stood;
One way a band select from forage drives
A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine,
From a fat meadow ground; or fleecy flock,
Ewes and their bleating lambs, over the plain,
Their booty; scarce with life the shepherds fly,

But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray;
With cruel tournament the squadrons join;
Where cattle pastured late, now scattered lies
With carcasses and arms the ensanguined field,
Deserted: others to a city strong
Lay siege, encamped; by battery, scale, and mine,
Assaulting; others from the wall defend
With dart, and javelin, stones and sulphurous fire,
On each hand slaughter, and gigantic deeds.
In other part the sceptred heralds call
To council, in the city gates: anon
Gray headed men and grave, with warriors mix'd,
Assemble, and harangues are heard; but soon
In factious opposition; till at last
Of middle age one rising, eminent
In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,
Of justice, of religion, truth, and peace,
And judgment from above: him old and young
Exploded, and had seized with violent hands,
Had not a cloud descending snatched him thence
Unseen amid the throng: so violence
Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law,
Through all the plain, and refuge none was found.
Adam was all in tears, and to his guide
Lamenting turned full sad; "O! what are these,
Death's ministers, not men? who thus deal death
Inhumanly to men and multiply
Ten thousand fold the sin of him who slew
His brother; for of whom such massacre
Make they, but of their brethren; men of men?
But who was that just man, whom had not Heaven
Rescued, had in his righteousness been lost?"
To whom thus Michael. "These are the product
Of those ill-mated marriages thou sawest;
Where good with bad were matched, who of themselves
Abhor to join; and, by imprudence mixed,
Produce prodigious births of body or mind.
Such were these giants, men of high renown;
For in those days might only shall be admired,
And valour and heroic virtue called;
To overcome in battle, and subdue
Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite
Manslaughter, shall be held the highest pitch
Of human glory; and for glory done
Of triumph, to be styled great conquerors,
Patrons of mankind, gods, and sons of gods;
Destroyers rightlier called, and plagues of men.
Thus fame shall be achieved, renown on earth;
And what most merits fame in silence hid.
But he, the seventh from thee, whom thou beheldest
The only righteous in a world perverse,
And therefore hated, therefore so beset
With foes, for daring single to be just,
And utter odious truth, that God would come
To judge them with his saints; him the most High,
Rapt in a balmy cloud, with winged steeds
Did, as thou saw'st, receive, to walk with God
High in salvation and the climes of bliss,
Exempt from death; to show thee what reward
Awaits the good, the rest what punishment;
Which now direct thine eyes and soon behold."
He looked, and saw the face of things quite changed;
The brazen throat of war had ceased to roar;
All now was turned to jollity and game,
To luxury and riot, feast and dance,
Marrying or prostituting, as befell,
Rape or adultery, where passing fair
Allured them; thence from cups to civil broils.
At length a reverend sire among them came,
And of their doings great dislike declared,
And testified against their ways; he oft
Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,
Triumphs or festivals; and to them preached
Conversion and repentance, as to souls
In prison under judgments imminent:
But all in vain: which when he saw, he ceased.
Contending, and removed his tents far off;
Then, from the mountain hewing timber tall,
Began to build a vessel of huge bulk,
Measured by cubit, length, and breadth, and height,
Smeared round with pitch, and in the side a door
Contrived, and of provisions laid in large
For man and beast: when lo, a wonder strange!
Of every beast, and bird, and insect small,
Came sevens, and pairs, and entered in as taught
Their order: last the sire and his three sons,
With their four wives; and God made fast the door.
Meanwhile the southwind rose, and, with black wings
Wide hovering, all the clouds together drove
From under Heaven; the hills to their supply
Vapour, and exhalation dusk and moist,
Sent up amain; and now the thickened sky
Like a dark ceiling stood; down rushed the rain
Impetuous, and continued till the earth
No more was seen; the floating vessel swum
Uplifted, and secure with beaked prow
Rode tilting o'er the waves; all dwellings else
Flood overwhelmed, and them with all their pomp
Deep under water rolled; sea covered sea,
Sea without shore; and in their palaces,
Where luxury late reigned, sea monsters whelped
And stabled; of mankind, so numerous late,
All left, in one small bottom swum embarked.
How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold
The end of all thy offspring, end so sad,
Depopulation! thee another flood,
Of tears and sorrow a flood thee also drowned,
And sunk thee as thy sons; till, gently reared
By the angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last.
Though comfortless; as when a father mourns
His children, all in view destroyed at once;
And scarce to the angel utteredst thus thy plaint

"O visions ill foreseen! better had I
Lived ignorant of future! so had borne
My part of evil only, each day's lot
Enough to bear; those now that were dispensed
The burden of many ages, on me light
At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth
Abortive, to torment me ere their being,
With thought that they must be. Let no man seek
Henceforth to be foretold what shall befall
Him or his children; evil he may be sure,
Which neither his foreknowing can prevent,
And he the future evil shall no less
In apprehension than in substance feel
Grievous to bear: but that care now is past,
Man is not whom to warn: those few escaped,
Famine and anguish will at last consume,
Wandering that watery desert: I had hope,
When violence was ceased, and war on earth,
All would have then gone well; peace would have crown'd
With length of happy days the race of man;
But I was far deceived; for now I see
Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.
How comes it thus? unfold, celestial guide,
And whether here the race of man will end."
To whom thus Michael. "Those whom last thou saw'st
In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they
First seen in acts of prowess eminent
And great exploits, but of true virtue void;
Who, having spilt much blood, and done much waste
Subduing nations, and achieved thereby
Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey;
Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and sloth,
Surfeit, and lust; till wantonness and pride
Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.
The conquered also, and enslaved by war,
Shall, with their freedom lost, all virtue lose
And fear of God; from whom their piety feigned
In sharp contest of battle found no aid
Against invaders; therefore, cooled in zeal,
Thenceforth shall practise how to live secure,
Worldly or dissolute, on what their lords
Shall leave them to enjoy; for the earth shall bear
More than enough, that temperance may be tried:
So all shall turn degenerate, all depraved;
Justice and temperance, truth and faith forgot;
One man except, the only son of light
In a dark age, against example good,
Against allurement, custom, and a world
Offended; fearless of reproach and scorn,
Or violence, he of their wicked ways
Shall them admonish, and before them set
The paths of righteousness, how much more safe,
And full of peace; denouncing wrath to come
On their impenitence; and shall return
Of them derived, but of God observed
The one just man alive; by his command
Shall build a wondrous ark, as thou beheld'st,
To save himself and household from amidst
A world devote to universal wrack.
No sooner he, with them of man and beast
Select for life, shall in the ark be lodged,
And sheltered round, but all the cataracts
Of Heaven set open on the earth shall pour
Rain, day and night; all fountains of the deep,
Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp
Beyond all bounds; till inundation rise
Above the highest hills: then shall this mount
Of Paradise by might of waves be moved
Out of his place, pushed by the horned flood,
With all his verdure spoiled, and trees adrift,
Down the great river to the opening gulf,
And there take root, an island salt and bare,
The haunt of seals and orcs, and seamews clang:
To teach thee that God attributes to place
No sanctity, if none be thither brought
By men who there frequent or therein dwell.
And now, what further shall ensue, behold."
He looked, and saw the ark hull on the flood,
Which now abated; for the clouds were fled,
Driven by a keen northwind, that, blowing dry,
Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decayed;
And the clear sun on his wide watery glass
Gazed hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew,
As after thirst; which made their flowing shrink
From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole
With soft foot towards the deep, who now had stopt
His sluices, as the Heaven his windows shut.
The ark no more now floats, but seems on ground
Fast on the top of some high mountain fixed.
And now the tops of hills as rocks appear:
With clamour, thence the rapid currents drive
Towards the retreating sea their furious tide.
Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies,
And after him the surer messenger,
A dove sent forth once and again to spy
Green tree or ground whereon his foot may light;
The second time returning, in his bill
An olive leaf he brings, pacific sign:
Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark
The ancient sire descends with all his train;
Then with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,
Grateful to heaven, over his head beholds
A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow
Conspicuous with three listed colours gay,
Betokening peace from God, and covenant new.
Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so sad,
Greatly rejoiced, and thus his joy broke forth.
"O thou, who future things canst represent
As present, heavenly instructor! I revive
At this last sight, assured that man shall live,
With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.
Far less I now lament with one whole world
Of wicked sons destroyed, than I rejoice

For one man found so perfect and so just,
That God vouchsafes to raise another world
From him, and all his anger to forget.
But say, what mean those coloured streaks in Heaven
Distended, as the brow of God appeased?
Or serve they as a flowery verge, to bind
The fluid skirts of that same watery cloud,
Lest it again dissolve, and shower the earth?"
To whom the archangel. "Dexterously thou aim'st;
So willingly doth God remit his ire,
Though late repenting, him of man depraved;
Grieved at his heart, when looking down he saw
The whole earth filled with violence, and all flesh
Corrupting each their way; yet, those removed,
Such grace shall one just man find in his sight
That he relents not to blot out mankind;
And makes a covenant never to destroy
The earth again by flood; nor let the sea
Surpass his bounds; nor rain to drown the world,
With man therein or beast; but when he brings
Over the earth a cloud, will therein set
His triple-coloured bow, whereon to look,
And call to mind his covenant: day and night,
Seed time and harvest, heat and hoary frost,
Shall hold their course, till fire purge all things new,
Both Heaven and earth, wherein the just shall dwell.

BOOK XII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The angel Michael continues, from the flood, to relate what shall succeed; then in the mention of Abraham, comes by degrees to explain, who that seed of the woman shall be, which was promised Adam and Eve in the fall; his incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension; the state of the church till his second coming. Adam, greatly satisfied and recomforted by these relations and promises, descends the hill with Michael; awakens Eve, who all this while had slept, but with gentle dreams composed to quietness of mind and submission. Michael in either hand leads them out of Paradise, the fiery sword waving behind them, and the cherubim taking their stations to guard the place.

As one, who in his journey bates at noon,
Though bent on speed; so here the archangel paused
Betwixt the world destroyed and world restored,
If Adam aught perhaps might interpose;
Then, with transition sweet, new speech resumes.
"Thus thou hast seen one world begin and end;
And man, as from a second stock proceed.
Much thou hast yet to see; but I perceive
Thy mortal sight to fail; objects divine
Must needs impair and weary human sense;
Henceforth what is to come I will relate;
Thou therefore give due audience and attend.
This second source of men, while yet but few,
And while the dread of judgment past remains
Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity,
With some regard to what is just and right
Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace;
Labouring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,
Corn, wine, and oil; and from the herb or flock,
Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid,
With large wine offerings poured, and sacred feast,
Shall spend their days in joys unblamed; and dwell
Long time in peace, by families and tribes,
Under paternal rule; till one shall rise
Of proud ambitious heart; who not content
With fair equality, fraternal state,
Will arrogate dominion undeserved
Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
Concord and law of nature from the earth;
Hunting (and men, not beasts, shall be his game)
With war and hostile snares such as refuse
Subjection to his empire tyrannous:
A mighty hunter thence he shall be styled
Before the Lord; as, in despite of Heaven,
Or from Heaven claiming second sovereignty;
And from rebellion shall derive his name,
Though of rebellion others he accuse.
He with a crew whom like ambition joins
With him or under him to tyrannize,
Marching from Eden towards the west, shall find
The plain wherein a black bituminous gurge
Boils out from under ground, the mouth of hell:
Of brick, and of that stuff they cast to build
A city and tower, whose top may reach to Heaven,
And get themselves a name; lest, far dispersed
In foreign lands, their memory be lost;
Regardless whether good or evil fame.
But God, who oft descends to visit men
Unseen, and through their habitations walks
To mark their doings, them beholding soon,
Comes down to see their city, ere the tower
Obstruct Heaven's towers, and in derision sets
Upon their tongues a various spirit, to rase
Quite out their native language; and, instead,
To sow a jangling noise of words unknown:
Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud
Among the builders; each to other calls
Not understood; till hoarse, and all in rage,
As mock'd they storm: great laughter was in Heaven,
And looking down, to see the hubbub strange
And hear the din: thus was the building left
Ridiculous, and the work confusion named."
Whereto thus Adam, fatherly displeased
"O execrable son! so to aspire
Above his brethren, to himself assuming
Authority usurped, from God not given:
He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
Dominion absolute; that right we hold
By his donation; but man over men
He made not lord; such title to himself

Reserving human left from human free.
But this usurper his encroachment proud
Stays not on man: to God his tower intends
Siege and defiance: wretched man! what food
Will he convey up thither to sustain
Himself and his rash army, where thin air
Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross,
And famish him of breath, if not of bread?"
To whom thus Michael. "Justly thou abhorr'st
That son, who on the quiet state of men
Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
Rational liberty: yet know withal,
Since thy original lapse, true liberty
Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
Twinned, and from her hath no dividual being:
Reason in man obscured, or not obeyed,
Immediately inordinate desires
And upstart passions catch the government
From reason, and to servitude reduce
Man, till then free. Therefore, since he permits
Within himself unworthy powers to reign
Over free reason, God, in judgment just,
Subjects him from without to violent lords;
Who oft as undeservedly inthral
His outward freedom: tyranny must be;
Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.
Yet sometimes nations will decline so low
From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong,
But justice, and some fatal curse annexed,
Deprives them of their outward liberty,
Their inward lost: witness the irreverent son
Of him who built the ark, who, for the shame
Done to his father, heard this heavy curse,
Servant of servants, on his vicious race.
Thus will this latter, as the former world,
Still tend from bad to worse, till God at last,
Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw
His presence from among them, and avert
His holy eyes; resolving from thenceforth
To leave them to their own polluted ways;
And one peculiar nation to select
From all the rest, of whom to be invoked,
A nation from one faithful man to spring:
Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,
Bred up in idol-worship; O, that men
(Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,
While yet the patriarch lived who 'scaped the flood,
As to forsake the living God, and fall
To worship their own work in wood and stone
For gods! yet him God the most high vouchsafes
To call by vision from his father's house,
His kindred, and false gods, into a land
Which he will show him, and from him will raise
A mighty nation, and upon him shower
His benediction so, that in his seed
All nations shall be blest: he straight obeys,
Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes:
I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith
He leaves his gods, his friends, and native soil,
Ur of Chaldæa, passing now the ford
To Haran; after him a cumbrous train
Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude,
Not wandering poor, but trusting all his wealth
With God, who called him, in a land unknown.
Canaan he now attains; I see his tents
Pitched about Sechem, and the neighbouring plain
Of Moreh; there by promise he receives
Gift to his progeny of all that land,
From Hamath northward to the desert south;
(Things by their names I call, though yet unnamed;)
From Hermon east to the great western sea;
Mount Hermon, yonder sea; each place behold
In prospect, as I point them; on the shore
Mount Carmel; here the double founted stream
Jordan, true limit eastward; but his sons
Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of hills.
This ponder, that all nations of the earth
Shall in his seed be blessed: by that seed
Is meant thy great deliverer, who shall bruise
The serpent's head; whereof to thee anon
Plainlier shall be revealed. This patriarch blest
Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,
A son, and of his son a grandchild leaves,
Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown;
The grandchild, with twelve sons increased, departs
From Canaan, to a land hereafter called
Egypt, divided by the river Nile;
See where it flows, disgorging at seven mouths
Into the sea: to sojourn in that land
He comes, invited by a younger son
In time of dearth; a son, whose worthy deeds
Raise him to be the second in that realm
Of Pharaoh: there he dies, and leaves his race
Growing into a nation; and now grown,
Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks
To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests
Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves
Inhospitably, and kills their infant males:
Till by two brethren (these two brethren called
Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim
His people from inthralment, they return
With glory and spoil, back to their promised land.
But first the lawless tyrant, who denies
To know their God, or message to regard,
Must be compelled by signs and judgments dire;
To blood unshed the rivers must be turned;
Frogs, lice, and flies must all his palace fill
With loathed intrusion, and fill all the land;
His cattle must of rot and murrain die;
Botches and blains must all his flesh emboss,
And all his people; thunder mixed with hail,
Hail mixed with fire, must rend th' Egyptian sky,
And wheel on th' earth, devouring where it rolls:

What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,
A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down
Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;
Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,
Palpable darkness, and blot out three days;
Last, with one midnight stroke, all the first-born
Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds
The river-dragon tamed, at length submits
To let his sojourners depart, and oft
Humbles his stubborn heart; but still as ice
More hardened after thaw; till, in his rage
Pursuing whom he late dismissed, the sea
Swallows him with his host; but them lets pass
As on dry land, between two crystal walls;
Awed by the rod of Moses so to stand
Divided, till his rescued gain their shore:
Such wondrous power God to his saint will lend,
Though present in his angel; who shall go
Before them in a cloud, and pillar of fire;
By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire;
To guide them in their journey, and remove
Behind them, while th' obdurate king pursues:
All night he will pursue, but his approach
Darkness defends between till morning watch;
Then through the fiery pillar and the cloud
God looking forth will trouble all his host,
And craze their chariot wheels: when by command
Moses once more his potent rod extends
Over the sea; the sea his rod obeys;
On their embattled ranks the waves return,
And overwhelm their war: the race elect
Safe towards Canaan from the shore advance
Through the wild desert, not the readiest way;
Lest, entering on the Canaanite alarmed,
War terrify them inexpert, and fear
Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather
Inglorious life with servitude; for life
To noble and ignoble is more sweet
Untrained in arms, where rashness leads not on.
This also shall they gain by their delay
In the wide wilderness; there they shall found
Their government, and their great senate choose
Thro' the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordained:
God from the mount of Sinai, whose gray top
Shall tremble, he descending, will himself,
In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpet's sound,
Ordain them laws; part, such as appertain
To civil justice; part, religious rites
Of sacrifice; informing them, by types
And shadows, of that destined seed to bruise
The serpent, by what means he shall achieve
Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God
To mortal ear is dreadful: they beseech
That Moses might report to them his will,
And terror cease; he grants what they besought,
Instructed that to God is no access
Without mediator, whose high office now
Moses in figure bears; to introduce
One greater, of whose day he shall foretell,
And all the prophets in their age the times
Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus, laws and rites
Established, such delight hath God in men
Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes
Among them to set up his tabernacle,
The holy One with mortal men to dwell:
By his prescript a sanctuary is framed
Of cedar, overlaid with gold, therein
An ark, and in the ark his testimony,
The records of his covenant; over these
A mercy-seat of gold, between the wings
Of two bright cherubim; before him burn
Seven lamps, as in a zodiac representing
The heavenly fires; over the tent a cloud
Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night,
Save when they journey, and at length they come,
Conducted by his angel, to the land
Promised to Abraham and his seed: the rest
Were long to tell; how many battles fought;
How many kings destroyed, and kingdoms won·
Or how the sun shall in mid heaven stand still
A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,
Man's voice commanding, 'Sun, in Gibeon stand
And thou moon in the vale of Aialon,
Till Israel overcome!' so call the third
From Abraham, son of Isaac; and from him
His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win."

Here Adam interposed. "O sent from Heaven,
Enlightener of my darkness, gracious things
Thou hast revealed; those chiefly which concern
Just Abraham and his seed: now first I find
Mine eyes true opening, and my heart much eased,
Erewhile perplexed with thoughts what would become
Of me and all mankind; but now I see
His day, in whom all nations shall be blest;
Favour unmerited by me, who sought
Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.
This yet I apprehend not, why to those
Among whom God will deign to dwell on earth
So many and so various laws are given;
So many laws argues so many sins
Among them; how can God with such reside?"

To whom thus Michael. "Doubt not but that sin
Will reign among them, as of thee begot;
And therefore was law given them, to evince
Their natural pravity, by stirring up
Sin against law to fight: that when they see
Law can discover sin, but not remove,
Save by those shadowy expiations weak,
The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude
Some blood more precious must be paid for man
Just for unjust; that in such righteousness
To them by faith imputed, they may find
Justification towards God, and peace
Of conscience; which the law by ceremonies
Can not appease, nor man the mortal part

Perform; and, not performing, can not live.
So law appears imperfect; and but given
With purpose to resign them in full time,
Up to a better covenant; disciplined
From shadowy types to truth; from flesh to spirit;
From imposition of strict laws to free
Acceptance of large grace; from servile fear
To filial; works of law to works of faith.
And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
Highly beloved, being but the minister
Of law, his people into Canaan lead;
But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Jesus call,
His name and office bearing, who shall quel
The adversary serpent, and bring back
Through the world's wilderness long wandered man
Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.
Meanwhile they, in their earthly Canaan placed,
Long time shall dwell and prosper; but when sins
National interrupt their public peace,
Provoking God to raise them enemies;
From whom as oft he saves them penitent
By judges first, then under kings: of whom
The second, both for piety renowned
And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive
Irrevocable, that his regal throne
For ever shall endure; the like shall sing
All prophecy, that of the royal stock
Of David (so I name this king) shall rise
A Son, the woman's seed to thee foretold,
Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust
All nations; and to kings foretold, of kings
The last; for of his reign shall be no end.
But first, a long succession must ensue;
And his next son, for wealth and wisdom famed,
The clouded ark of God, till then in tents
Wandering shall in a glorious temple enshrine.
Such follow him, as shall be registered
Part good, part bad; of bad the longer scroll;
Whose foul idolatries, and other faults
Heaped to the popular sum, will so incense
God, as to leave them, and expose their land,
Their city, his temple, and his holy ark,
With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey
To that proud city, whose high walls thou saw'st
Left in confusion; Babylon thence called.
There in captivity he lets them dwell
The space of seventy years; then brings them back,
Remembering mercy, and his covenant sworn
To David, stablished as the days of Heaven.
Returned from Babylon by leave of kings
Their lords, whom God disposed, the house of God
They first re-edify, and for a while
In mean estate live moderate; till, grown
In wealth and multitude, factious they grow;
But first among the priests dissension springs,
Men who attend the altar, and should most
Endeavour peace: their strife pollution brings
Upon the temple itself; at last they seize
The sceptre, and regard not David's sons;
Then lose it to a stranger, that the true
Anointed king Messiah might be born
Barred of his right; yet at his birth a star,
Unseen before in Heaven, proclaims him come
And guides the eastern sages, who inquire
His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold:
His place of birth a solemn angel tells
To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night;
They gladly thither haste, and by a choir
Of squadroned angels hear his carol sung.
A virgin is his mother, but his sire
The power of the Most High: he shall ascend
The throne hereditary, and bound his reign
With earth's wide bounds, his glory with the heavens."

He ceased, discerning Adam with such joy
Surcharged, as had like grief been dewed in tears,
Without the vent of words; which these he breathed.

"O prophet of glad tidings, finisher
Of utmost hope! now clear I understand
What oft my steadiest thoughts have search'd in vain,
Why our great Expectation should be called
The seed of woman: virgin mother, hail!
High in the love of Heaven; yet from my loins
Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son
Of God most High: so God with man unites!
Needs must the serpent now his capital bruise
Expect with mortal pain: say where and when
Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the victor's heel."

To whom thus Michael. "Dream not of their fight,
As of a duel, or the local wounds
Of head or heel: nor therefore joins the Son
Manhood to Godhead, with more strength to foil
Thy enemy; nor so is overcome
Satan, whose fall from Heaven, a deadlier bruise,
Disabled, not to give thee thy death's wound:
Which he, who comes thy Saviour, shall recure,
Not by destroying Satan, but his works
In thee, and in thy seed: nor can this be,
But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,
Obedience to the law of God imposed
On penalty of death, and suffering death,
The penalty to thy transgression due;
And due to theirs which out of thine will grow
So only can high justice rest appaid.
The law of God exact he shall fulfil
Both by obedience and by love, though love
Alone fulfil the law; thy punishment
He shall endure, by coming in the flesh
To a reproachful life and cursed death;
Proclaiming life to all who shall believe
In his redemption; and that his obedience,
Imputed, becomes theirs by faith, his merits

To save them, not their own, though legal, works.
For this he shall live hated, be blasphemed,
Seized on by force, judged, and to death condemned
A shameful and accursed, nailed to the cross
By his own nation; slain for bringing life;
But to the cross he nails thy enemies,
The law that is against thee, and the sins
Of all mankind, with him there crucified,
Never to hurt them more who rightly trust
In this his satisfaction; so he dies,
But soon revives; death over him no power
Shall long usurp; ere the third dawning light
Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise
Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light
Thy ransom paid, which man from death redeems.
His death for man, as many as offered life
Neglect not, and the benefit embrace
By faith not void of works: this godlike act
Annuls thy doom, the death thou should'st have died,
In sin for ever lost from life; this act
Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength,
Defeating sin and death, his two main arms,
And fix far deeper in his head their stings
Than temporal death shall bruise the victor's heel,
Or theirs whom he redeems; a death, like sleep,
A gentle wafting to immortal life.
Nor after resurrection shall he stay
Longer on earth than certain times to appear
To his disciples, men who in his life
Still followed him; to them shall leave in charge
To teach all nations what of him they learned
And his salvation; them who shall believe
Baptizing in the profluent stream, the sign
Of washing them from guilt of sin to life
Pure, and in mind prepared, if so befall,
For death, like that which the Redeemer died,
All nations they shall teach; for, from that day,
Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins
Salvation shall be preached, but to the sons
Of Abraham's faith, wherever through the world;
So in his seed all nations shall be blest.
Then to the Heaven of Heavens he shall ascend,
With victory, triumphing through the air
Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
The serpent, prince of air, and drag in chains
Through all his realm, and there confounded leave;
Then enter into glory, and resume
His seat at God's right-hand, exalted high
Above all names in Heaven; and thence shall come,
When this world's dissolution shall be ripe,
With glory and power to judge both quick and dead;
To judge the unfaithful dead, but to reward
His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
Whether in Heaven or earth; for then the earth
Shall all be Paradise, far happier place
Than this of Eden, and far happier days."
So spake the archangel Michael; then paused,
As at the world's great period: and our sire,
Replete with joy and wonder, thus replied.
"O goodness infinite, goodness immense!
That all this good of evil shall produce,
And evil turn to good; more wonderful
Than that which by creation first brought forth
Light out of darkness! Full of doubt I stand,
Whether I should repent me now of sin
By me done and occasioned, or rejoice
Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring,
To God more glory, more good will to men,
From God, and over wrath grace shall abound.
But say, if our Deliverer up to Heaven
Must reascend, what will betide the few
His faithful, left among the unfaithful herd,
The enemies of truth? who then shall guide
His people, who defend? will they not deal
Worse with his followers than with him they dealt?"
"Be sure they will," said the angel; "but from Heaven
He to his own a Comforter will send,
The promise of the Father, who shall dwell
His spirit within them; and the law of faith,
Working through love, upon their hearts shall write,
To guide them in all truth; and also arm
With spiritual armour, able to resist
Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts;
What man can do against them, not afraid,
Though to the death; against such cruelties
With inward consolations recompensed,
And oft supported so as shall amaze
Their proudest persecutors: for the Spirit,
Poured first on his apostles, whom he sends
To evangelize the nations, then on all
Baptized, shall them with wondrous gifts endue
To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,
As did their Lord before them. Thus they win
Great numbers of each nation to receive
With joy the tidings brought from Heaven: at length
Their ministry performed, and race well run,
Their doctrine and their story written left,
They die; but in their room, as they forewarn,
Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves,
Who all the sacred mysteries of Heaven
To their own vile advantages shall turn
Of lucre and ambition; and the truth
With superstitions and traditions taint
Left only in those written records pure,
Though not but by the Spirit understood.
Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,
Places, and titles and with these to join

Secular power; though feigning still to act
By spiritual, to themselves appropriating
The spirit of God, promised alike and given
To all believers; and, from that pretence,
Spiritual laws by carnal power shall force
On every conscience; laws which none shall find
Left them enrolled, or what the Spirit within
Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then
But force the spirit of grace itself, and bind
His consort liberty? what, but unbuild
His living temples, built by faith to stand
Their own faith, not another's? for, on earth,
Who against faith and conscience can be heard
Infallible? yet many will presume:
Whence heavy persecution shall arise
On all, who in the worship persevere
Of spirit and truth; the rest, far greater part,
Will deem in outward rites and specious forms
Religion satisfied; truth shall retire
Bestuck with slanderous darts, and works of faith
Rarely be found: so shall the world go on,
To good malignant, to bad men benign;
Under her own weight groaning, till the day
Appear of respiration to the just,
And vengeance to the wicked, at return
Of him so lately promised to thy aid,
The woman's seed; obscurely then foretold,
Now amplier known thy Saviour and thy Lord;
Last, in the clouds, from Heaven to be revealed
In glory of the Father, to dissolve
Satan with his perverted world; then raise
From the conflagrant mass, purged and refined,
New Heavens, new earth, ages of endless date,
Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love;
To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss."

He ended; and thus Adam last replied.
"How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest,
Measured this transient world, the race of time,
Till time stands fixed! beyond is all abyss,
Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.
Greatly instructed I shall hence depart;
Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain;
Beyond which was my folly to aspire.
Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,
And love with fear the only God; to walk
As in his presence; ever to observe
His providence; and on him sole depend,
Merciful over all his works, with good
Still overcoming evil, and by small
Accomplishing great things, by things deemed weak
Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise
By simply meek: that suffering for truth's sake
Is fortitude to highest victory,
And, to the faithful, death the gate of life;
Taught this by his example, whom I now
Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest."

To whom thus also the angel last replied.
"This having learned, thou hast attained the sum
Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars
Thou knew'st by name, and all the ethereal powers,
All secrets of the deep, all Nature's works,
Or works of God in Heaven, air, earth, or sea,
And all the riches of this world enjoyedst,
And all the rule, one empire; only add
Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith,
Add virtue, patience, temperance; add love,
By name to come called charity, the soul
Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loath
To leave this Paradise, but shall possess
A Paradise within thee, happier far.
Let us descend now therefore from this to
Of speculation; for the hour precise
Exacts our parting hence; and see! the guards,
By me encamped on yonder hill, expect
Their motion; at whose front a flaming sword,
In signal of remove, waves fiercely round:
We may no longer stay: go, waken Eve;
Her also I with gentle dreams have calmed
Portending good, and all her spirits composed
To meek submission; thou, at season fit,
Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard,
Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,
The great deliverance by her seed to come
(For by the woman's seed) on all mankind:
That ye may live, which will be many days,
Both in one faith unanimous, though sad,
With cause, for evils past, yet much more cheered
With meditation on the happy end."

He ended, and they both descend the hill;
Descended, Adam to the bower where Eve
Lay sleeping, ran before; but found her waked;
And thus with words not sad she him received.
"Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st, I know;
For God is also in sleep; and dreams advise,
Which he hath sent propitious, some great good
Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress
Wearied I fell asleep: but now led on;
In me is no delay; with thee to go,
Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,
Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me
Art all things under Heaven, all places thou,
Who for my wilful crime art banished hence.
This further consolation yet secure
I carry hence; though all by me is lost,
Such favour I unworthy am vouchsafed,
By me the promised Seed shall all restore."

So spake our mother Eve, and Adam heard
Well pleased, but answered not; for now too nigh
The archangel stood; and from the other hill
To their fixed station, all in bright array
The cherubim descended; on the ground
Gliding meteorous, as evening mist
Risen from a river o'er the marish glides,
And gather's ground fast at the labourer's heel
Homeward returning. High in front advanced

The brandished sword of God before them blazed,
Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,
And vapour as the Lybian air adust,
Began to parch that temperate clime; whereat
In either hand the hastening angel caught
Our lingering parents, and to the eastern gate
Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast
To the subjected plain; then disappeared.
They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
Waved over by that flaming brand, the gate
With dreadful faces thronged, and fiery arms:
Some natural tears they dropt, but wiped them soon;
The world was all before them where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide:
They, hand in hand, with wandering steps, and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way.

Paradise Regained.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed. Invocation of the Holy Spirit.—The poem opens with John baptizing at the river Jordan. Jesus coming there is baptized; and is attested, by the descent of the Holy Ghost, and by a voice from Heaven, to be the Son of God. Satan, who is present, upon this immediately flies up into the regions of the air: where, summoning his infernal council, he acquaints them with his apprehensions that Jesus is that seed of the woman, destined to destroy all their power; and points out to them the immediate necessity of bringing the matter to proof, and of attempting, by snares and fraud, to counteract and defeat the person, from whom they have so much to dread. This office he offers himself to undertake; and his offer being accepted, sets out on his enterprise.—In the mean time God, in the assembly of holy angels, declares that he has given up his Son to be tempted by Satan; but foretells that the tempter shall be completely defeated by him:—upon which the angels sing a hymn of triumph. Jesus is led up by the Spirit into the wilderness, while he is meditating on the commencement of his great office of Saviour of Mankind. Pursuing his meditations, he narrates, in a soliloquy, what divine and philanthropic impulses he had felt from his early youth, and how his mother Mary, on perceiving these dispositions in him, had acquainted him with the circumstances of his birth, and informed him that he was no less a person than the Son of God; to which he adds what his own inquiries and reflections had supplied in confirmation of this great truth, and particularly dwells on the recent attestation of it at the river Jordan. Our Lord passes forty days, fasting in the wilderness; where the wild beasts become mild and harmless in his presence. Satan now appears under the form of an old peasant; and enters into discourse with our Lord, wondering what could have brought him alone into so dangerous a place, and at the same time professing to recognise him for the person lately acknowledged by John, at the river Jordan, to be the Son of God. Jesus briefly replies. Satan rejoins with a description of the difficulty of supporting life in the wilderness; and entreats Jesus, if he be really the Son of God, to manifest his divine power, by changing some of the stones into bread. Jesus reproves him and at the same time tells him that he knows who he is. Satan instantly avows himself, and offers an artful apology for himself and his conduct. Our blessed Lord severely reprimands him, and refutes every part of his justification. Satan, with much semblance of humility, still endeavours to justify himself, and, professing his admiration of Jesus and his regard for virtue, requests to be permitted at a future time to hear more of his conversation; but is answered, that this must be as he shall find permission from above. Satan then disappears, and the book closes with a short description of night coming on in the desert.

I, who erewhile the happy garden sung
By one man's disobedience lost, now sing
Recovered Paradise to all mankind,
By one man's firm obedience fully tried
Through all temptation, and the tempter foiled
In all his wiles, defeated and repulsed,
And Eden raised in the waste wilderness.

Thou Spirit, who led'st the glorious eremite
Into the desert, his victorious field,
Against the spiritual foe, and brought'st him thence
By proof the undoubted Son of God, inspire,
As thou art wont, my prompted song, else mute,
And bear through height or depth of nature's bounds,
With prosperous wing full summed, to tell of deeds
Above heroic, though in secret done,
And unrecorded left through many an age;
Worthy to have not remained so long unsung.

Now had the great Proclaimer, with a voice
More awful than the sound of trumpet, cried
Repentance, and Heaven's kingdom nigh at hand
To all baptized: to his great baptism flocked
With awe the regions round, and with them came
From Nazareth the son of Joseph deemed
To the flood Jordan; came, as then obscure,
Unmarked, unknown; but him the Baptist soon
Descried, divinely warned, and witness bore
As to his worthier, and would have resigned
To him his heavenly office; nor was long
His witness unconfirmed: on him baptized
Heaven opened, and in likeness of a dove
The Spirit descended, while the Father's voice
From Heaven pronounced him his beloved Son.
That heard the Adversary, who, roving still
About the world, at that assembly famed
Would not be last, and, with the voice divine
Nigh thunderstruck, the exalted Man, to whom

Such high attest was given, a while surveyed
With wonder; then, with envy fraught and rage,
Flies to his place, nor rests, but in mid air
To council summons all his mighty peers,
Within thick clouds and dark tenfold involved,
A gloomy consistory; and them amidst,
With looks aghast and sad, he thus bespake.
"O ancient Powers of air, and this wide world,
(For much more willingly I mention air,
This our old conquest, than remember hell,
Our hated habitation,) well ye know
How many ages, as the years of men,
This universe we have possessed, and ruled,
In manner at our will, the affairs of earth,
Since Adam and his facile consort Eve
Lost Paradise, deceived by me; though since
With dread attending, when that fatal wound
Shall be inflicted by the seed of Eve
Upon my head; long the decrees of Heaven
Delay, for longest time to him is short;
And now, too soon for us, the circling hours
This dreaded time have compassed, wherein we
Must bide the stroke of that long-threatened wound,
(At least if so we can, and by the head
Broken be not intended all our power
To be infringed, our freedom and our being,
In this fair empire won of earth and air,)
For this ill news I bring, the woman's Seed,
Destined to this, is late of woman born.
His birth to our just fear gave no small cause;
But his growth now to youth's full flower displaying
All virtue, grace, and wisdom to achieve
Things highest, greatest, multiplies my fear.
Before him a great prophet, to proclaim
His coming, is sent harbinger, who all
Invites, and in the consecrated stream
Pretends to wash off sin, and fit them, so
Purified, to receive him pure, or rather
To do him honour as their king: all come,
And he himself among them was baptized;
Not thence to be more pure, but to receive
The testimony of Heaven, that who he is
Thenceforth the nations may not doubt; I saw
The prophet do him reverence; on him, rising
Out of the water, Heaven above the clouds
Unfold her crystal doors; thence on his head
A perfect dove descend, whate'er it meant,
And out of Heaven the sovereign voice I heard,
'This is my son beloved, in him am pleased.'
His mother then is mortal, but his Sire
He who obtains the monarchy of Heaven:
And what will he not do to advance his Son?
His first-begot we know, and sore have felt,
When his fierce thunder drove us to the deep:
Who this is we must learn, for man he seems
In all his lineaments, though in his face
The glimpses of his Father's glory shine.
Ye see our danger on the utmost edge
Of hazard, which admits no long debate,
But must with something sudden be opposed,
(Not force, but well couched fraud, well woven snares,)
Ere in the head of nations he appear,
Their king, their leader, and supreme on earth.
I, when no other durst, sole undertook
The dismal expedition to find out
And ruin Adam, and the exploit performed
Successfully; a calmer voyage now
Will waft me; and the way, found prosperous once,
Induces best to hope of like success."
He ended, and his words impression left
Of much amazement to the infernal crew,
Distracted and surprised with deep dismay
At these sad tidings; but no time was then
For long indulgence to their fears or grief:
Unanimous they all commit the care
And management of this main enterprise
To him their great dictator, whose attempt
At first against mankind so well had thrived
In Adam's overthrow, and led their march
From hell's deep vaulted den to dwell in light,
Regents, and potentates, and kings, yea gods,
Of many a pleasant realm and province wide.
So to the coast of Jordan he directs
His easy steps, girded with snaky wiles,
Where he might likeliest find this new-declared,
This man of men, attested Son of God,
Temptation and all guile on him to try;
So to subvert whom he suspected raised
To end his reign on earth, so long enjoyed:
But, contrary, unweeting he fulfilled
The purposed council, preordained and fixed,
Of the Most High; who, in full frequence bright
Of angels, thus to Gabriel smiling spake.
"Gabriel, this day by proof thou shalt behold,
Thou and all angels conversant on earth
With man or men's affairs, how I begin
To verify that solemn message, late
On which I sent thee to the Virgin pure
In Galilee, that she should bear a son,
Great in renown, and called the Son of God;
Then told'st her, doubting how these things could be
To her a virgin, that on her should come
The Holy Ghost, and the power of the Highest
O'ershadow her: this man, born and now upgrown,
To show him worthy of his birth divine
And high prediction, henceforth I expose
To Satan: let him tempt, and now assay
His utmost subtlety, because he boasts
And vaunts of his great cunning to the throng
Of his apostacy: he might have learnt
Less overweening, since he failed in Job,
Whose constant perseverance overcame
Whate'er his cruel malice could invent.
He now shall know I can produce a man,

Of female seed, far abler to resist
All his solicitations, and at length
All his vast force, and drive him back to hell,
Winning by conquest, what the first man lost
By fallacy surprised. But first I mean
To exercise him in the wilderness;
There he shall first lay down the rudiments
Of his great warfare, ere I send him forth
To conquer Sin and Death, the two grand foes,
By humiliation and strong sufferance:
His weakness shall o'ercome Satanic strength,
And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh,
That all the angels and ethereal powers,
They now, and men hereafter, may discern
From what consummate virtue I have chose
This perfect man, by merit called my son,
To earn salvation for the sons of men."

So spake th' eternal Father, and all Heaven
Admiring stood apace, then into hymns
Burst forth, and in celestial measures moved,
Circling the throne and singing, while the hand
Sung with the voice, and this the argument:

"Victory and triumph to the Son of God,
Now entering his great duel, not of arms
But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles!
The Father knows the Son; therefore secure
Ventures his filial virtue, though untried,
Against whate'er may tempt, whate'er seduce,
Allure, or terrify, or undermine.
Be frustrate, all ye stratagems of hell,
And, devilish machinations, come to nought!"

So they in Heaven their odes and vigils tuned:
Meanwhile the Son of God, who yet some days
Lodged in Bethabara, where John baptized,
Musing, and much revolving in his breast
How best the mighty work he might begin
Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first
Publish his godlike office, now mature,
One day forth walked alone, the spirit leading
And his deep thoughts, the better to converse
With solitude, till, far from track of men,
Thought following thought, and step by step led on,
He entered now the bordering desert wild,
And, with dark shades and rocks environed round,
His holy meditations thus pursued.

"O, what a multitude of thoughts at once
Awakened in me swarm, while I consider
What from within I feel myself, and hear
What from without comes often to my ears,
Ill sorting with my present state compared!
When I was yet a child, no childish play
To me was pleasing; all my mind was set
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do,
What might be public good; myself I thought
Born to that end, born to promote all truth,
All righteous things: therefore, above my years,
The law of God I read, and found it sweet,
Made it my whole delight, and in it grew
To such perfection, that, ere yet my age
Had measured twice six years, at our great feast
I went into the temple, there to hear
The teachers of our law, and to propose
What might improve my knowledge or their own.
And was admired by all: yet this not all
To which my spirit aspired; victorious deeds
Flamed in my heart, heroic acts; one while
To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke;
Then to subdue and quell, o'er all the earth,
Brute violence and proud tyrannic power,
Till truth were freed, and equity restored;
Yet held it more humane, more heavenly, first
By winning words to conquer willing hearts;
And make persuasion do the work of fear;
At least to try, and teach the erring soul,
Not wilfully misdoing, but unware
Misled; the stubborn only to subdue.
These growing thoughts my mother soon perceiving,
By words at times cast forth, inly rejoiced,
And said to me apart; 'High are thy thoughts,
O Son, but nourish them, and let them soar
To what height sacred virtue and true worth
Can raise them, though above example high;
By matchless deeds express thy matchless Sire,
For know, thou art no son of mortal man;
Though men esteem thee low of parentage,
Thy father is the eternal King who rules
All heaven and earth, angels, and sons of men;
A messenger from God foretold thy birth
Conceived in me a virgin; he foretold
Thou should'st be great, and sit on David's throne,
And of thy kingdom there should be no end.
At thy nativity, a glorious choir
Of angels, in the fields of Bethlehem, sung
To shepherds, watching at their folds by night,
And told them the Messiah now was born,
Where they might see him, and to thee they came,
Directed to the manger where thou layest,
For in the inn was left no better room:
A star not seen before, in Heaven appearing,
Guided the wise men thither from the east,
To honour thee with incense, myrrh, and gold:
By whose bright course led on they found the place,
Affirming it thy star, new graven in heaven,
By which they knew the king of Israel born.
Just Simeon and prophetic Anna, warned
By vision, found thee in the temple, and spake,
Before the altar and the vested priest,
Like things of thee to all that present stood.'—
This having heard, straight I again revolved
The law and prophets, searching what was writ
Concerning the Messiah, to our scribes
Known partly, and soon found, of whom they spake
I am; this chiefly, that my way must lie

Through many a hard assay, even to the death,
Ere I the promised kingdom can attain,
Or work redemption for mankind, whose sins
Full weight must be transferred upon my head.
Yet, neither thus disheartened or dismayed,
The time prefixed I waited; when behold
The Baptist, (of whose birth I oft had heard,
Not knew by sight,) now come, who was to come
Before Messiah, and his way prepare!
I, as all others to his baptism came,
Which I believed was from above; but he
Straight knew me, and with loudest voice proclaimed
Me him (for it was shown him so from Heaven,)
Me him, whose harbinger he was; and first
Refused on me his baptism to confer,
As much his greater, and was hardly won:
But as I rose out of the laving stream,
Heaven opened her eternal doors, from whence
The Spirit descended on me like a dove;
And last, the sum of all, my Father's voice,
Audibly heard from Heaven, pronounced me his,
Me his beloved Son, in whom alone
He was well pleased; by which I knew the time
Now full, that I no more should live obscure,
But openly begin, as best becomes,
The authority which I derived from Heaven.
And now by some strong motion I am led
Into this wilderness, to what intent
I learn not yet; perhaps I need not know,
For what concerns my knowledge God reveals."
So spake our Morning Star, then in his rise,
And looking round on every side beheld
A pathless desert, dusk with horrid shades;
The way he came not having marked, return
Was difficult, by human steps untrod:
And he still on was led, but with such thoughts
Accompanied of things past and to come
Lodged in his breast, as well might recommend
Such solitude before choicest society.
Full forty days he passed, whether on hill
Sometimes, anon in shady vale, each night
Under the covert of some ancient oak,
Or cedar, to defend him from the dew,
Or harboured in one cave, is not revealed;
Nor tasted human food, nor hunger felt,
Till those days ended; hungered then at last
Among wild beasts: they at this sight grew mild,
Nor sleeping him nor waking harmed; his walk
The fiery serpent fled, and noxious worm,
The lion and fierce tiger glared aloof.
But now an aged man in rural weeds,
Following, as seemed, the quest of some stray ewe,
Or withered sticks to gather, which might serve
Against a winter's day, when winds blow keen,
To warm him wet returned from field at eve,
He saw approach, who first with curious eye
Perused him, then with words thus uttered spake.

"Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this place
So far from path or road of men, who pass
In troop or caravan? for single none
Durst ever, who returned, and dropt not here
His carcass, pined with hunger and with drought.
I ask the rather, and the more admire,
For that to me thou seem'st the man, whom late
Our new baptizing Prophet at the ford
Of Jordan honoured so, and called thee Son
Of God: I saw and heard, for we sometimes
Who dwell in this wild, constrained by want, come forth
To town or village nigh, (nighest is far,)
Where aught we hear, and curious are to hear
What happens new; fame also finds us out."
To whom the Son of God. "Who brought me hither,
Will bring me hence; no other guide I seek."
"By miracle he may," replied the swain,
"What other way I see not; for we here
Live on tough roots and stubs, to thirst inured
More than the camel, and to drink go far,
Men to much misery and hardship born:
But, if thou be the son of God, command
That out of these hard stones be made thee bread,
So shalt thou save thyself, and us relieve,
With food, whereof we wretched seldom taste."
He ended, and the Son of God replied.
"Thinkest thou such force in bread? Is it not written,
(For I discern thee other than thou seemest,)
Man lives not by bread only, but each word
Proceeding from the mouth of God, who fed
Our fathers here with manna? in the mount
Moses was forty days, nor eat, nor drank;
And forty days Elijah, without food,
Wandered this barren waste; the same I now:
Why dost thou then suggest to me distrust,
Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art?"
Whom thus answered the arch fiend, now undisguised.
"'Tis true, I am that Spirit unfortunate,
Who, leagued with millions more in rash revolt,
Kept not my happy station, but was driven
With them from bliss to the bottomless deep,
Yet to that hideous place not so confined
By rigour unconniving, but that oft,
Leaving my dolorous prison, I enjoy
Large liberty to round this globe of earth,
Or range in the air; nor from the Heaven of Heavens
Hath he excluded my resort sometimes.
I came among the sons of God, when he
Gave up into my hands Uzzean Job
To prove him, and illustrate his high worth;
And, when to all his angels he proposed
To draw the proud king Ahab into fraud
That he might fall in Ramoth, they demurring,

I undertook that office, and the tongues
Of all his flattering prophets glibbed with lies
To his destruction, as I had in charge;
For what he bids I do. Though I have lost
Much lustre of my native brightness, lost
To be beloved of God, I have not lost
To love, at least contemplate and admire,
What I see excellent in good, or fair,
Or virtuous; I should so have lost all sense:
What can be then less in me than desire
To see thee and approach thee, whom I know
Declared the Son of God, to hear attent
Thy wisdom, and behold thy godlike deeds?
Men generally think me much a foe
To all mankind: why should I? they to me
Never did wrong or violence; by them
I lost not what I lost, rather by them
I gained what I have gained, and with them dwell,
Copartner in these regions of the world,
If not disposer; lend them oft my aid,
Oft my advice by presages and signs,
And answers, oracles, portents and dreams,
Whereby they may direct their future life.
Envy they say, excites me, thus to gain
Companions of my misery and wo.
At first it may be; but long since with wo
Nearer acquainted, now I feel, by proof,
That fellowship in pain divides not smart,
Nor lightens aught each man's peculiar load.
Small consolation then, were man adjoined:
This wounds me most, (what can it less?) that man,
Man fallen shall be restored, I never more."
To whom our Saviour sternly thus replied.
"Deservedly thou griev'st, composed of lies
From the beginning, and in lies wilt end;
Who boast'st release from hell, and leave to come
Into the Heaven of Heavens: thou com'st indeed,
As a poor miserable captive thrall
Comes to the place where he before had sat
Among the prime in splendour, now deposed,
Ejected, emptied, gazed unpitied, shunned,
A spectacle of ruin, or of scorn,
To all the host of Heaven: the happy place
Imparts to thee no happiness, no joy;
Rather inflames thy torment; representing
Lost bliss, to thee no more communicable,
So never more in hell than when in Heaven.
But thou art serviceable to Heaven's King.
Wilt thou impute to obedience what thy fear
Extorts, or pleasure to do ill excites?
What but thy malice moved thee to misdeem
Of righteous Job, then cruelly to afflict him
With all inflictions? but his patience won.
The other service was thy chosen task,
To be a liar in four hundred mouths;
For lying is thy sustenance, thy food.
Yet thou pretendest to truth; all oracles
By thee are given, and what confessed more true
Among the nations? that hath been thy craft,
By mixing somewhat true to vent more lies.
But what have been thy answers, what but dark
Ambiguous, and with double sense deluding,
Which they who asked have seldom understood:
And not well understood as good not known?
Who ever by consulting at thy shrine
Returned the wiser, or the more instruct,
To fly or follow what concerned him most,
And run not sooner to his fatal snare?
For God hath justly given the nations up
To thy delusions; justly, since they fell
Idolatrous: but, when his purpose is
Among them to declare his providence
To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth,
But from him, or his angels president
In every province? who, themselves disdaining
To approach thy temples, give thee in command
What, to the smallest tittle, thou shalt say
To thy adorers? thou, with trembling fear,
Or like a fawning parasite, obey'st;
Then to thyself ascrib'st the truth foretold.
But this thy glory shall be soon retrenched;
No more shalt thou by oracling abuse
The Gentiles; henceforth oracles are ceased,
And thou no more with pomp and sacrifice
Shall be inquired at Delphos, or elsewhere;
At least in vain, for they shall find thee mute.
God hath now sent his living oracle
Into the world to teach his final will,
And sends his Spirit of truth henceforth to dwell
In pious hearts, an inward oracle
To all truth requisite for men to know."
So spake our Saviour; but the subtle Fiend,
Though inly stung with anger and disdain,
Dissembled, and this answer smooth returned.
"Sharply thou hast insisted on rebuke,
And urged me hard with doings, which not will
But misery hath wrested from me. Where
Easily can'st thou find one miserable,
And not enforced ofttimes to part from truth,
If it may stand him more instead to lie,
Say and unsay, feign, flatter, or abjure,
But thou art placed above me, thou art Lord;
From thee I can, and must submiss, endure
Check or reproof, and glad to 'scape so quit
Hard are the ways of truth, and rough to walk,
Smooth on the tongue discoursed, pleasing to the ear
And tuneable as sylvan pipe or song;
What wonder then if I delight to hear
Her dictates from thy mouth? most men admire
Virtue, who follow not her lore: permit me
To hear thee when I come, (since no man comes,)
And talk at least, though I despair to attain.
Thy father, who is holy, wise, and pure,
Suffers the hypocrite or atheous priest
To tread his sacred courts, and minister

About his altar, handling holy things,
Praying or vowing; and vouchsafed his voice
To Balaam reprobate, a prophet yet
Inspired: disdain not such access to me."
To whom our Saviour, with unaltered brow.
"Thy coming hither, though I know thy scope,
I bid not, or forbid; do as thou find'st
Permission from above; thou canst not more."
He added not; and Satan, bowing low
His gray dissimulation, disappeared
Into thin air diffused: for now began
Night with her sullen wings to double-shade
The desert; fowls in their clay nests were couched;
And now wild beasts came forth the woods to roam.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

The disciples of Jesus, uneasy at his long absence, reason amongst themselves concerning it. Mary also gives vent to her maternal anxiety; in the expression of which she recapitulates many circumstances respecting the birth and early life of her Son.—Satan again meets his Infernal Council, reports the bad success of his first temptation of our Blessed Lord, and calls upon them for counsel and assistance. Belial proposes tempting of Jesus with women. Satan rebukes Belial for his dissoluteness, charging on him all the profligacy of that kind ascribed by the poets to the heathen gods, and rejects his proposal as in no respect likely to succeed. Satan then suggests other modes of temptation, particularly proposing to avail himself of the circumstance of our Lord's hungering; and, taking a band of chosen spirits with him, returns to resume his enterprise.—Jesus hungers in the desert. Night comes on: the manner in which our Saviour passes the night is described.—Morning advances.—Satan again appears to Jesus, and, after expressing wonder that he should be so entirely neglected in the wilderness, where others had been miraculously fed, tempts him with a sumptuous banquet of the most luxurious kind.—This he rejects, and the banquet vanishes.—Satan, finding our Lord not to be assailed on the ground of appetite, tempts him again by offering him riches, as the means of acquiring power: this Jesus also rejects, producing many instances of great actions performed by persons under virtuous poverty, and specifying the danger of riches, and the cares and pains inseparable from power and greatness.

Meanwhile the new baptized, who yet remained
At Jordan with the Baptist, and had seen
Him whom they heard so late expressly called
Jesus Messiah, Son of God declared,
And on that high authority had believed,
And with him talked and with him lodged; I mean
Andrew and Simon, famous after known,
With others though in holy writ not named;
Now missing him their joy so lately found,
(So lately found, and so abruptly gone,)
Began to doubt and doubted many days,
And, as the days increased, increased their doubt;
Sometimes they thought he might be only shown,
And for a time caught up to God, as once
Moses was in the mount, and missing long;
And the great Thisbite, who on fiery wheels
Rode up to Heaven, yet once again to come;
Therefore, as those young prophets then with care
Sought lost Elijah, so in each place these
Nigh to Bethabara in Jericho
The city of palms, Ænon and Salem old,
Machærus, and each town or city walled
On this side the broad lake Genezaret,
Or in Peræa; but returned in vain.
Then on the bank of Jordan, by a creek,
Where winds with reeds and osiers whispering play,
Plain fishermen, (no greater men them call,)
Close in a cottage low together got,
Their unexpected loss and plaints out breathed.
"Alas, from what high hope to what relapse
Unlooked for are we fallen! our eyes beheld
Messiah certainly now come, so long
Expected of our fathers; we have heard
His words, his wisdom full of grace and truth;
Now, now, for sure, deliverance is at hand,
The kingdom shall to Israel be restored:
Thus we rejoiced, but soon our joy is turned
Into perplexity and new amaze:
For whither is he gone, what accident
Hath wrapt him from us? will he now retire
After appearance, and again prolong
Our expectation? God of Israel,
Send thy Messiah forth, the time is come!
Behold the kings of the earth, how they oppress
Thy chosen; to what height their power unjust
They have exalted, and behind them cast
All fear of thee; arise and vindicate
Thy glory; free thy people from their yoke!
But let us wait; thus far he hath performed,
Sent his Anointed, and to us revealed him,
By his great Prophet, pointed at and shown
In public, and with him we have conversed;
Let us be glad of this, and all our fears
Lay on his providence; he will not fail,
Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recall,
Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence;
Soon we shall see our Hope, our Joy return."
Thus they, out of their plaints, new hope resume
To find whom at the first they found unsought;
But, to his mother Mary, when she saw
Others returned from baptism, not her son,
Nor left at Jordan tidings of him none,
Within her breast, though calm, her breast though pure,
Motherly cares and fears got head, and raised
Some troubled thoughts, which she in sighs thus clad.
"O what avails me now that honour high
To have conceived of God, or that salute,
'Hail, highly favoured, among women blessed!'
While I to sorrows am no less advanced.
And fears as eminent, above the lot

Of other women, by the birth I bore;
In such a season born, when scarce a shed
Could be obtained to shelter him or me
From the bleak air; a stable was our warmth,
A manger his; yet soon enforced to fly
Thence into Egypt, till the murderous king
Were dead, who sought his life, and missing filled
With infant blood the streets of Bethlehem:
From Egypt home returned, in Nazareth
Hath been our dwelling many years; his life
Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,
Little suspicious to any king; but now,
Full grown to man, acknowledged, as I hear,
By John the Baptist, and in public shown,
Son owned from Heaven by his Father's voice,
I looked for some great change; to honour? no;
But trouble, as old Simeon plain foretold,
That to the fall and rising, he should be
Of many in Israel, and to a sign
Spoken against, that through my very soul
A sword shall pierce: this is my favoured lot,
My exaltation to afflictions high;
Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest;
I will not argue that, nor will repine.
But where delays he now? some great intent
Conceals him: when twelve years he scarce had seen,
I lost him, but so found, as well as saw
He could not lose himself, but went about
His Father's business; what he meant I mused,
Since understood; much more his absence now
Thus long to some great purpose he obscures.
But I to wait with patience am inured;
My heart hath been a storehouse long of things
And sayings laid up, portending strange events."

Thus Mary, pondering oft, and oft to mind
Recalling what remarkably had passed
Since first her salutation heard, with thoughts
Meekly composed awaited the fulfilling:
The while her son, tracing the desert wild,
Sole, but with holiest meditations fed,
Into himself descended, and at once
All his great work to come before him set;
How to begin, how to accomplish best
His end of being on earth, and mission high:
For Satan, with sly preface to return,
Had left him vacant, and with speed was gone
Up to the middle region of thick air,
Where all his potentates in council sat;
There, without sign of boast, or sign of joy,
Solicitous and blank, he thus began.

"Princes, Heaven's ancient sons, ethereal thrones,
Demonian spirits now, from the element
Each of his reign allotted, rightlier called
Powers of fire, air, water, and earth beneath.
(So may we hold our place and these mild seats
Without new trouble,) such an enemy
Is risen to invade us, who no less
Threatens than our expulsion down to hell.
I, as I undertook, and with the vote
Consenting in full frequence was empowered,
Have found him, viewed him, tasted him; but find
Far other labour to be undergone
Than when I dealt with Adam, first of men,
Though Adam by his wife's allurement fell,
However to this Man inferior far;
If he be man by mother's side, at least
With more than human gifts from Heaven adorned,
Perfections absolute, graces divine,
And amplitude of mind to greatest deeds.
Therefore I am returned, lest confidence
Of my success with Eve in Paradise
Deceive ye to persuasion over sure
Of like succeeding here: I summon all
Rather to be in readiness, with hand
Or counsel to assist; lest I, who erst
Thought none my equal, now be overmatched."

So spake the old Serpent, doubting; and from all
With clamour was assured their utmost aid
At his command: when from amidst them rose
Belial, the dissolutest spirit that fell,
The sensualist, and, after Asmodai,
The fleshliest incubus; and thus advised.

"Set women in his eye, and in his walk
Among daughters of men the fairest found:
Many are in each region passing fair
As the noon sky; more like to goddesses
Than mortal creatures; graceful and discreet,
Expert in amorous arts, enchanting tongues
Pursuasive, virgin majesty with mild
And sweet allayed, yet terrible to approach;
Skilled to retire, and, in retiring, draw
Hearts after them tangled in amorous nets.
Such object hath the power to soften and tame
Severest temper, smooth the rugged'st brow
Enerve, and with voluptuous hope dissolve,
Draw out with credulous desire, and lead
At will the manliest, resolutest breast,
As the magnetic hardest iron draws.
Women, when nothing else beguiled the heart
Of wisest Solomon, and made him build,
And made him bow, to the gods of his wives."

To whom quick answer Satan thus returned
"Belial, in much uneven scale thou weighest
All others by thyself: because of old
Thou thyself doted'st on womankind, admiring
Their shape, their colour, and attractive grace,
None are, thou think'st, but taken with such toys
Before the flood, thou with thy lusty crew,
False titled sons of God, roaming the earth,
Cast wanton eyes on the daughters of men,
And coupled with them, and begot a race.
Have we not seen, or by relation heard,
In courts and regal chambers how thou lurk'st
In wood or grove, by mossy fountain side,
In valley or green meadow, to waylay
Some beauty rare, Calisto, Clymene

Daphne, or Semele, Antiopa,
Or Amymone, Syrinx, many more
Too long; then lay'st thy scapes on names adored,
Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, or Pan,
Satyr, or Faun, or Sylvan? But these haunts
Delight not all; among the sons of men,
How many have with a smile made small account
Of Beauty and her lures, easily scorned,
All her assaults, on worthier things intent!
Remember that Pellean conqueror,
A youth, how all the beauties of the east
He slightly viewed, and slightly overpassed;
How he surnamed of Africa dismissed,
In his prime youth, the fair Iberian maid.
For Solomon, he lived at ease, and full
Of honour, wealth, high fare, aimed not beyond
Higher design than to enjoy his state;
Thence to the bait of women lay exposed:
But he whom we attempt is wiser far
Than Solomon, of more exalted mind,
Made and set wholly on the accomplishment
Of greatest things. What woman will you find,
Though of this age the wonder and the fame,
On whom his leisure will vouchsafe an eye
Of fond desire? or should she, confident,
As sitting queen adored on Beauty's throne,
Descend with all her winning charms begirt
To enamour, as the zone of Venus once
Wrought that effect on Jove, so fables tell:
How would one look from his majestic brow,
Seated as on the top of virtue's hill,
Discountenance her despised, and put to rout
All her array; her female pride deject,
Or turn to reverent awe! for beauty stands
In the admiration only of weak minds
Led captive; cease to admire, and all her plumes
Fall flat, and shrink into a trivial toy,
At every sudden slighting quite abashed:
Therefore with manlier objects we must try
His constancy; with such as have more show
Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praise;
Rocks, whereon greatest men have oftest wrecked;
Or that which only seems to satisfy
Lawful desires of nature, not beyond;
And now I know he hungers, where no food
Is to be found, in the wide wilderness:
The rest commit to me; I shall let pass
No advantage, and his strength as oft assay."
He ceased, and heard their grant in loud acclaim:
Then forthwith to him takes a chosen band
Of spirits, likest to himself in guile,
To be at hand, and at his beck appear,
If cause were to unfold some active scene
Of various persons, each to know his part:
Then to the desert takes with these his flight;
Where, still from shade to shade, the Son of God
After forty days fasting had remained,
Now hungering first, and to himself thus said.

"Where will this end? four times ten days I've passed
Wandering this woody maze, and human food
Nor tasted, nor had appetite; that fast
To virtue I impute not, or count part
Of what I suffer here; if nature need not,
Or God support nature without repast
Though needing, what praise is it to endure?
But now I feel I hunger, which declares
Nature hath need of what she asks; yet God
Can satisfy that need some other way,
Though hunger still remain; so it remain
Without this body's wasting, I content me,
And from the sting of famine fear no harm;
Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts, that feed
Me hungering more to do my Father's will."
It was the hour of night, when thus the Son
Communed in silent walk, then laid him down
Under the hospitable covert nigh
Of trees thick interwoven; there he slept,
And dreamed, as appetite is wont to dream,
Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet.
Him thought, he by the brook of Cherith stood,
And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
Food to Elijah bringing, even and morn,
Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought:
He saw the prophet also, how he fled
Into the desert, and how there he slept
Under a juniper; then how awaked
He found his supper on the coals prepared,
And by the angel was bid rise and eat,
And eat the second time after repose,
The strength whereof sufficed him forty days:
Sometimes that with Elijah he partook,
Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.
Thus wore out night; and now the herald lark
Left his ground-nest, high towering to descry
The morn's approach, and greet her with his song;
As lightly from his grassy couch up rose
Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream;
Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting waked.
Up to a hill anon his steps he reared,
From whose high top to ken the prospect round,
If cottage were in view, sheep-cote, or herd;
But cottage, herd, or sheep-cote none he saw;
Only in a bottom saw a pleasant grove,
With chant of tuneful birds resounding loud:
Thither he bent his way, determined there
To rest at noon; and entered soon the shade
High roofed and walks beneath, and alleys brown,
That opened in the midst a woody scene;
Nature's own work it seemed, nature taught art,
And, to a superstitious eye, the haunt
Of woodgods and woodnymphs: he viewed it round.
When suddenly a man before him stood,
Not rustic as before, but seemlier clad,
As one in city, or court, or palace bred,

And with fair speech these words to him addressed.
"With granted leave officious I return,
But much more wonder that the Son of God
In this wild solitude so long should bide,
Of all things destitute, and, well I know,
Not without hunger. Others of some note,
As story tells, have trod this wilderness;
The fugitive bondwoman, with her son
Outcast Nebaioth, yet found here relief
By a providing angel; all the race
Of Israel here had famished, had not God
Rained from Heaven manna; and that prophet bold,
Native of Thebez, wandering here was fed
Twice by a voice inviting him to eat:
Of thee these forty days none hath regard,
Forty and more deserted here indeed."
To whom thus Jesus. "What conclud'st thou hence?
They all had need; I, as thou seest, have none."
"How hast thou hunger then?" Satan replied.
"Tell me if food were now before thee set,
Would'st thou not eat?" "Thereafter as I like
The giver," answered Jesus. "Why should that
Cause thy refusal?" said the subtle fiend.
"Hast thou not right to all created things?
Owe not all creatures by just right to thee
Duty and service, nor to stay till bid,
But tender all their power? nor mention I
Meats by the law unclean, or offered first
To idols, those young Daniel could refuse;
Nor proffered by an enemy, though who
Would scruple that, with want oppressed? Behold,
Nature ashamed, or, better to express,
Troubled, that thou should'st hunger, hath purveyed
From all the elements her choicest store,
To treat thee, as beseems, and as her Lord,
With honour: only deign to sit and eat."
He spake no dream; for, as his words had end,
Our Saviour lifting up his eyes beheld,
In ample space under the broadest shade,
A table richly spread in regal mode,
With dishes piled, and meats of noblest sort
And savour; beasts of chase, or fowl of game,
In pastry built, or from the spit, or boiled,
Grisamber-steamed;* all fish, from sea or shore,
Freshet or purling brook, of shell or fin,
And exquisitest name, for which was drained
Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coast.
(Alas, how simple, to these cates compared,
Was that crude apple that diverted Eve!)
And at a stately side-board, by the wine
That fragrant smell diffused, in order stood
Tall stripling youths rich clad, of fairer hue
Than Ganymed or Hylas; distant more
Under the trees now tripped, now solemn stood,
Nymphs of Diana's train, and Naiades
With fruits or flowers from Amalthea's horn,
And ladies of th' Hesperides, that seemed
Fairer than famed of old, or fabled since
Of fairy damsels, met in forests wide
By nights of Logres, or of Lyones,
Lancelot, or Pelleas, or Pellenore:
And all the while harmonious airs were heard
Of chiming strings, or charming pipes; and winds
Of gentlest gale Arabian odours fanned
From their soft wings, and Flora's earliest smells.
Such was the splendour; and the Tempter now
His invitation earnestly renewed.
"What doubts the Son of God to sit and eat?
These are not fruits forbidden; no interdict
Defends the touching of these viands pure;
Their taste no knowledge works, at least of evil,
But life preserves, destroys life's enemy,
Hunger, with sweet restorative delight.
All these are spirits of air, and woods, and springs
Thy gentle ministers, who come to pay
Thee homage, and acknowledge thee their Lord:
What doubt'st thou, Son of God? sit down and eat."
To whom thus Jesus temperately replied.
"Said'st thou not that to all things I had right?
And who withholds my power that right to use?
Shall I receive by gift what of my own,
When and where likes me best, I can command
I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,
Command a table in this wilderness,
And call swift flights of angels ministrant
Arrayed in glory on my cup to attend:
Why should'st thou then obtrude this diligence,
In vain, where no acceptance it can find?
And with my hunger what hast thou to do?
Thy pompous delicacies I contemn,
And count thy specious gifts no gifts, but guiles."
To whom thus answered Satan malcontent.
"That I have also power to give thou seest;
If of that power I bring thee voluntary
What I might have bestowed on whom I pleased,
And rather opportunely in this place
Choose to impart to thy apparent need,
Why should'st thou not accept it? but I see
What I can do or offer is suspect;
Of these things others quickly will dispose,
Whose pains have earned thee far-fet spoil." With that
Both table and provision vanished quite
With sound of harpies' wings and talons heard.
Only the importune Tempter still remained,
And with these words his temptation pursued.
"By hunger, that each other creature tames,
Thou art not to be harmed, therefore not moved
Thy temperance, invincible besides,
For no allurements yields to appetite;

* "*Grisamber-steamed*"—Scented with ambergris; a species of luxury in Milton's time.

And all thy heart is set on high designs,
High actions: but wherewith to be achieved?
Great acts require great means of enterprise;
Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,
A carpenter thy father known, thyself
Bred up in poverty and straits at home,
Lost in a desert here and hunger-bit:
Which way, or from what hope dost thou aspire
To greatness? whence authority derivest?
What followers, what retinue canst thou gain,
Or at thy heels the dizzy multitude,
Longer than thou canst feed them on thy cost?
Money brings honour, friends, conquest, and realms:
What raised Antipater the Edomite,
And his son Herod placed on Judah's throne,
Thy throne, but gold that got him puissant friends?
Therefore, if at great things thou would'st arrive,
Get riches first, get wealth, and treasure heap,
Not difficult, if thou hearken to me:
Riches are mine, fortune is in my hand;
They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain
While virtue, valour, wisdom sit in want."

To whom thus Jesus patiently replied.
"Yet wealth without these three is impotent
To gain dominion, or to keep it gained.
Witness those ancient empires of the earth,
In height of all their flowing wealth dissolved:
But men endued with these have oft attained
In lowest poverty to highest deeds;
Gideon and Jeptha, and the shepherd lad,
Whose offspring on the throne of Judah sat
So many ages, and shall yet regain
That seat, and reign in Israel without end.
Among the heathen, (for throughout the world
To me is not unknown what hath been done
Worthy of memorial,) canst thou not remember
Quintius, Fabricius, Curius, Regulus?
For I esteem those names of men so poor,
Who could do mighty things, and could contemn
Riches, though offered from the hand of kings.
And what in me seems wanting, but that I
May also in this poverty as soon
Accomplish what they did, perhaps, and more?
Extol not riches then, the toil of fools,
The wise man's cumbrance, if not snare; more apt
To slacken virtue, and abate her edge,
Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise.
What if with like aversion I reject
Riches and realms? yet not, for that a crown,
Golden in show, is but a wreath of thorns,
Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights,
To him who wears the regal diadem,
When on his shoulders each man's burden lies;
For therein stands the office of a king,
His honour, virtue, merit, and chief praise,
That for the public all this weight he bears.
Yet he who reigns within himself, and rules
Passions, desires, and fears, is more a king;
Which every wise and virtuous man attains;
And who attains not, ill aspires to rule
Cities of men, or headstrong multitudes,
Subject himself to anarchy within,
Or lawless passions in him, which he serves.
But to guide nations in the way of truth
By saving doctrine, and from error lead
To know, and, knowing, worship God aright,
Is yet more kingly; this attracts the soul,
Governs the inner man, the nobler part;
That other o'er the body only reigns,
And oft by force, which, to a generous mind,
So reigning, can be no sincere delight.
Besides, to give a kingdom hath been thought
Greater and nobler done, than to lay down
Far more magnanimous, than to assume.
Riches are needless then, both for themselves,
And for thy reason why they should be sought,
To gain a sceptre, oftest better missed."

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, in a speech of much flattering commendation, endeavours to awaken in Jesus a passion for glory, by particularizing various instances of conquests achieved, and great actions performed, by persons at an early period of life. Our Lord replies, by showing the vanity of worldly fame, and the improper means by which it is generally attained; and contrasts with it the true glory of religious patience and virtuous wisdom, as exemplified in the character of Job. Satan justifies the love of glory from the example of God himself, who requires it from all his creatures. Jesus detects the fallacy of this argument, by showing that, as goodness is the true ground on which glory is due to the great Creator of all things, sinful man can have no right whatever to it.—Satan then urges our Lord respecting his claim to the throne of David: he tells him that the kingdom of Judea, being at that time a province of Rome, can not be got possession of without much personal exertion on his part, and presses him to lose no time in beginning to reign. Jesus refers him to the time allotted for this, as for all other things; and after intimating somewhat respecting his own previous sufferings, asks Satan, why he should be so solicitous for the exaltation of one, whose rising was destined to be his fall. Satan replies, that his own desperate state, by excluding all hope, leaves little room for fear; and that, as his own punishment was equally doomed, he is not interested in preventing the reign of one, from whose apparent benevolence he might rather hope for some interference in his favour.—Satan still pursues his former incitements; and, supposing that the seeming reluctance of Jesus to be thus advanced might arise from his being unacquainted with the world and its glories, conveys him to the summit of a high mountain, and from thence shows him most of the kingdoms of Asia, particularly pointing out to his notice some extraordinary military preparations of the Parthians to resist the incursions of the Scythians. He then informs our Lord, that he showed him this purposely that he might see how necessary military exertions are to retain the possession of kingdoms, as well as to subdue them at first: and advises him to consider how impossible it was to maintain Judea against two such powerful neighbours as the Romans and Parthians, and how necessary it would be to form an alliance with one or other of them. At the same time he recommends, and engages to secure to him

that of the Parthians; and tells him that by this means his power will be defended from anything that Rome or Cæsar might attempt against it, and that he will be able to extend his glory wide, and especially to accomplish, what was particularly necessary to make the throne of Judea really the throne of David, the deliverance and restoration of the ten tribes, still in a state of captivity. Jesus having briefly noticed the vanity of military efforts and the weakness of the arm of flesh, says, that when the time comes for ascending his allotted throne he shall not be slack; he remarks on Satan's extraordinary zeal for the deliverance of the Israelites, to whom he had always shown himself an enemy, and declares their servitude to be the consequence of their idolatry: but adds, that at a future time it may perhaps please God to recall them, and restore them to their liberty and native land.

So spake the Son of God; and Satan stood
A while, as mute confounded what to say,
What to reply, confuted, and convinced
Of his weak arguing and fallacious drift;
At length, collecting all his serpent wiles,
With soothing words renewed, him thus accosts.
"I see thou knowest what is of use to know,
What best to say canst say, to do canst do;
Thy actions to thy words accord; thy words
To thy large heart give utterance due; thy heart
Contains of good, wise, just, the perfect shape.
Should kings and nations from thy mouth consult,
Thy counsel would be as the oracle
Urim and Thummim, those oraculous gems
On Aaron's breast; or tongue of seers old
Infallible: or wert thou sought to deeds
That might require the array of war, thy skill
Of conduct would be such, that all the world
Could not sustain thy prowess, or subsist
In battle, though against thy few in arms.
These godlike virtues wherefore dost thou hide,
Affecting private life, or more obscure
In savage wilderness? wherefore deprive
All earth her wonder at thy acts, thyself,
The fame and glory; glory the reward
That sole excites to high attempts, the flame
Of most erected spirits, most tempered pure
Ethereal, who all pleasures else despise,
All treasures and all gain esteem as dross,
And dignities and powers all but the highest?
Thy years are ripe, and overripe; the son
Of Macedonian Philip had ere these
Won Asia, and the throne of Cyrus held
At his dispose; young Scipio had brought down
The Carthaginian pride; young Pompey quelled
The Pontic king, and in triumph had rode.
Yet years, and to ripe years judgment mature,
Quench not the thirst of glory, but augment.
Great Julius, whom now all the world admires,
The more he grew in years, the more inflamed
With glory, wept that he had lived so long
Inglorious: but thou yet art not too late."
To whom our Saviour calmly thus replied.
"Thou neither dost persuade me to seek wealth
For empire's sake, nor empire to affect
For glory's sake, by all thy argument.
For what is glory but the blaze of fame,
The people's praise, if always praise unmixed?
And what the people but a herd confused,
A miscellaneous rabble, who extol
Things vulgar, and, well weighed, scarce worth the praise?
They praise, and they admire, they know not what,
And know not whom, but as one leads the other;
And what delight to be by such extolled,
To live upon their tongues and be their talk,
Of whom to be dispraised were no small praise?
His lot who dares be singularly good.
The intelligent among them and the wise
Are few, and glory scarce of few is raised.
This is true glory and renown, when God
Looking on the earth with approbation marks
The just man, and divulges him through Heaven
To all his angels, who with true applause
Recount his praises: thus he did to Job,
When, to extend his fame through Heaven and earth,
As thou to thy reproach may'st well remember,
He asked thee, 'Hast thou seen my servant Job?'
Famous he was in Heaven, on earth less known;
Where glory is false glory, attributed
To things not glorious, men not worthy of fame.
They err, who count it glorious, to subdue
By conquest far and wide, to overrun
Large countries, and in field great battles win,
Great cities by assault: what do these worthies,
But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter, and enslave
Peaceable nations, neighbouring, or remote,
Made captive, yet deserving freedom more
Than those their conquerors, who leave behind
Nothing but ruin wheresoe'er they rove,
And all their flourishing works of peace destroy;
Then swell with pride, and must be titled gods,
Great benefactors of mankind, deliverers,
Worshipped with temple, priest, and sacrifice?
One is the Son of Jove, of Mars the other;
Till conqueror Death discover them scarce men,
Rolling in brutish vices, and deformed,
Violent or shameful death their due reward.
But if there be in glory aught of good,
It may by means far different be attained,
Without ambition, war, or violence;
By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,
By patience, temperance: I mention still
Him, whom thy wrongs with saintly patience borne,
Made famous in a land and times obscure;
Who names not now with honour patient Job?
Poor Socrates, (who next more memorable?)
By what he taught, and suffered for so doing,
For truth's sake suffering death, unjust, lives now
Equal in fame to proudest conquerors.
Yet if for fame and glory aught be done,
Aught suffered; if young African for fame

His wasted country freed from Punic rage;
The deed becomes unpraised, the man at least,
And loses, though but verbal, his reward.
Shall I seek glory then, as vain men seek,
Oft not deserved? I seek not mine, but his
Who sent me, and thereby witness whence I am."
To whom the Tempter murmuring thus replied.
"Think not so slight of glory; therein least
Resembling thy great Father: he seeks glory,
And for his glory all things made, all things
Orders and governs; nor content in Heaven
By all his angels glorified, requires
Glory from men, from all men, good or bad,
Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption;
Above all sacrifice, or hallowed gift,
Glory he requires, and glory he receives,
Promiscuous from all nations, Jew, or Greek,
Or barbarous, nor exception hath declared;
From us, his foes pronounced, glory he exacts."
To whom our Saviour fervently replied.
"And reason; since his word all things produced,
Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,
But to show forth his goodness, and impart
His good communicable to every soul
Freely; of whom what could he less expect
Than glory and benediction, that is, thanks,
The slightest, easiest, readiest recompense
From them who could return him nothing else,
And, not returning that, would likeliest render
Contempt instead, dishonour, obloquy?
Hard recompense, unsuitable return
For so much good, so much beneficence.
But why should man seek glory who of his own
Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs
But condemnation, ignominy, and shame?
Who, for so many benefits received,
Turned recreant to God, ingrate and false,
And so of all true good himself despoiled,
Yet, sacrilegious, to himself would take
That which to God alone of right belongs:
Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,
That who advance his glory, not their own,
Them he himself to glory will advance."
So spake the Son of God; and here again
Satan had not to answer, but stood struck
With guilt of his own sin; for he himself,
Insatiable of glory, had lost all;
Yet of another plea bethought him soon.
"Of glory, as thou wilt," said he, "so deem;
Worth or not worth the seeking, let it pass.
But to a kingdom thou art born, ordained
To sit upon thy father David's throne,
By mother's side thy father; though thy right
Be now in powerful hands, that will not part
Easily from possession won with arms:
Judea now and all the promised land,
Reduced a province under Roman yoke,
Obeys Tiberius; nor is always ruled
With temperate sway; oft have they violated
The temple, oft the law, with foul affronts,
Abominations rather, as did once
Antiochus: and think'st thou to regain
Thy right by sitting still or thus retiring?
So did not Maccabeus: he indeed
Retired unto the desert, but with arms;
And o'er a mighty king so oft prevailed,
That by strong hand his family obtained
Though priests, the crown, and David's throne usurped,
With Modin and her suburbs once content.
If kingdom move thee not, let move thee zeal
And duty; zeal and duty are not slow,
But on occasion's forelock watchful wait,
They themselves rather are occasion best;
Zeal of thy father's house, duty to free
Thy country from her heathen servitude.
So shalt thou best fulfil, best verify
The prophets old who sung thy endless reign;
The happier reign, the sooner it begins:
Reign then; what canst thou better do the while?"
To whom our Saviour answer thus returned.
"All things are best fulfilled in their due time;
And time there is for all things, Truth hath said
If of my reign prophetic writ hath told,
That it shall never end, so, when begin,
The Father in his purpose hath decreed;
He in whose hand all times and seasons roll.
What if he hath decreed that I shall first
Be tried in humble state, and things adverse,
By tribulations, injuries, insults,
Contempts, and scorns, and snares, and violence
Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting,
Without distrust or doubt, that he may know
What I can suffer, how obey? who best
Can suffer, best can do; best reign, who first
Well hath obeyed; just trial, ere I merit
My exaltation without change or end.
But what concerns it thee when I begin
My everlasting kingdom? why art thou
Solicitous? what moves thy inquisition?
Knowest thou not that my rising is thy fall,
And my promotion will be thy destruction?"
To whom the Tempter inly racked, replied.
"Let that come when it comes; all hope is lost
Of my reception into grace: what worse?
For where no hope is left, is left no fear:
If there be worse, the expectation more
Of worse torments me than the feeling can.
I would be at the worst: worst is my port,
My harbour, and my ultimate repose:
The end I would attain, my final good.
My error was my error, and my crime
My crime; whatever, for itself condemned;
And will alike be punished, whether thou
Reign or reign not; though to that gentle brow
Willingly could I fly, and hope thy reign,
From that placid aspect and meek regard,
Rather than aggravate my evil state,

Would stand between me and thy Father's ire
(Whose ire I dread more than the fire of hell,)
A shelter, and a kind of shading cool
Interposition, as a summer's cloud.
If I then to the worst that can be haste,
Why move thy feet so slow to what is best,
Happiest, both to thyself and all the world,
That thou, who worthiest art, should'st be their king?
Perhaps thou lingerest in deep thoughts detained
Of the enterprise so hazardous and high:
No wonder; for though in thee be united
What of perfection can in man be found,
Or human nature can receive, consider,
Thy life hath yet been private, most part spent
At home, scarce viewed the Galilean towns,
And once a year Jerusalem, a few days'
Short sojourn; and what thence could'st thou observe?
The world thou hast not seen, much less her glory,
Empires and monarchs, and their radiant courts,
Best school of best experience, quickest insight
In all things that to greatest actions lead.
The wisest, unexperienced, will be ever
Timorous and loth, with novice modesty,
(As he who, seeking asses, found a kingdom,)
Irresolute, unhardy, unadventurous:
But I will bring thee where thou soon shalt quit
Those rudiments, and see before thine eyes
The monarchies of the earth, their pomp and state;
Sufficient introduction to inform
Thee, of thyself so apt, in regal arts,
And regal mysteries, that thou may'st know
How best their opposition to withstand."
With that (such power was given him then) he took
The Son of God up to a mountain high.
It was a mountain at whose verdant feet
A spacious plain, outstretched in circuit wide,
Lay pleasant; from his side two rivers flowed,
The one winding, th' other straight, and left between
Fair champaign with less rivers interveined,
Then meeting joined their tribute to the sea;
Fertile of corn the glebe, of oil, and wine;
With herds the pastures thronged, with flocks the hills:
Huge cities and high towered, that well might seem
The seats of mightiest monarchs; and so large
The prospect was, that here and there was room
For barren desert, fountainless and dry.
To this high mountain top the Tempter brought
Our Saviour, and new train of words began.
"Well have we speeded, and o'er hill and dale,
Forest and field and flood, temples and towers,
But shorter many a league, here thou behold'st
Assyria, and her empire's ancient bounds,
Araxes and the Caspian lake; thence on
As far as Indus east, Euphrates west,
And oft beyond: to south the Persian bay
And, inaccessible, the Arabian drought:
Here Nineveh, of length within her wall
Several days' journey, built by Ninus old,
Of that first golden monarchy the seat,
And seat of Salmanassar, whose success
Israel in long captivity still mourns;
There Babylon, the wonder of all tongues,
As ancient, but rebuilt by him who twice
Judah and all thy father David's house
Led captive, and Jerusalem laid waste,
Till Cyrus set them free; Persepolis,
His city, there thou seest, and Bactra there:
Ecbatana her structure vast there shows,
And Hecatompylos her hundred gates;
There Susa by Choaspes, amber stream,
The drink of none but kings; of later fame,
Built by Emathian or by Parthian hands,
The great Seleucia, Nisibis, and there
Artaxata, Teredon, Ctesiphon,
Turning with easy eye thou mayest behold.
All these the Parthian (now some ages past
By great Arsaces led, who founded first
That empire) under his dominion holds,
From the luxurious kings of Antioch won.
And just in time thou comest to have a view
Of his great power; for now the Parthian king
In Ctesiphon hath gathered all his host
Against the Scythian, whose incursions wild
Have wasted Sogdiana; to her aid
He marches now in haste; see, though from far,
His thousands, in what martial equipage
They issue forth, steel bows and shafts their arms,
Of equal dread in flight, or in pursuit;
All horsemen, in which fight they most excel:
See how in warlike muster they appear,
In rhombs, and wedges, and half-moons, and wings."
He looked, and saw what numbers numberless
The city gates outpoured, light armed troops,
In coats of mail and military pride;
In mail their horses clad, yet fleet and strong,
Prancing their riders bore, the flower and choice
Of many provinces from bound to bound;
From Arachosia, from Candaor east,
And Margiana to the Hyrcanian cliffs
Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian dales;
From Atropatia and the neighbouring plains
Of Adiabene, Media, and the south
Of Susiana, to Balsara's haven.
He saw them in their forms of battle ranged,
How quick they wheeled, and, flying, behind them shot
Sharp sleet of arrowy showers against the face
Of their pursuers, and overcame by flight;
The field all iron cast a gleaming brown;
Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor on each horn
Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight,
Chariots, or elephants indorsed with towers

Of arcners; nor of labouring pioneers
A multitude, with spades and axes armed
To lay hills plain, fell woods, or valleys fill,
Or where plain was raise hill, or overlay
With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke;
Mules after these, camels and dromedaries,
And wagons, fraught with utensils of war.
Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,
When Agrican with all his northern powers
Besieged Albracca, as romances tell,
The city of Gallaphrone, from whence to win
The fairest of her sex Angelica,
His daughter, sought by many prowest knights,
Both Paynim and the peers of Charlemagne.
Such and so numerous was their chivalry:
At sight whereof the fiend yet more presumed,
And to our Saviour thus his words renewed.

"That thou may'st know I seek not to engage
Thy virtue, and not every way secure
On no slight grounds thy safety; hear, and mark
To what end I have brought thee hither, and shown
All this fair sight: thy kingdom, though foretold
By prophet or by angel, unless thou
Endeavour, as thy father David did,
Thou never shalt obtain; prediction still
In all things, and all men, supposes means;
Without means used, what it predicts revokes.
But say thou wert possessed of David's throne,
By free consent of all, none opposite,
Samaritan or Jew; how couldst thou hope
Long to enjoy it quiet and secure,
Between two such enclosing enemies,
Roman and Parthian? therefore one of these
Thou must make sure thy own; the Parthian first
By my advice, as nearer, and of late
Found able by invasion to annoy
Thy country, and captive lead away her kings,
Antigonus and old Hyrcanus, bound,
Maugre the Roman: it shall be my task
To render thee the Parthian at dispose,
Choose which thou wilt, by conquest or by league:
By him thou shalt regain, without him not,
That which alone can truly reinstal thee
In David's royal seat, his true successor,
Deliverance of thy brethren, those ten tribes,
Whose offspring in his territory yet serve,
In Habor, and among the Medes dispersed:
Ten sons of Jacob, two of Joseph, lost
Thus long from Israel, serving, as of old
Their fathers in the land of Egypt served,
This offer sets before thee to deliver.
These if from servitude thou shalt restore
To their inheritance, then, nor till then,
Thou on the throne of David in full glory,
From Egypt to Euphrates and beyond,
Shalt reign, and Rome or Cæsar need not fear."

To whom our Saviour answered thus, unmoved:

"Much ostentation, vain of fleshy arm
And fragile arms, much instrument of war,
Long in preparing, soon to nothing brought,
Before mine eyes thou hast set; and in my ear
Vented much policy, and projects deep
Of enemies, of aids, battles and leagues,
Plausible to the world, to me worth nought.
Means I must use, thou say'st; prediction else
Will unpredict, and fail me of the throne:
My time, I told thee, (and that time for thee
Were better farthest off) is not yet come:
When that comes, think not thou to find me slack
On my part aught endeavouring, or to need
Thy polite maxims, or that cumbersome
Luggage of war there shown me, argument
Of human weakness rather than of strength.
My brethren, as thou call'st them, those ten tribes
I must deliver if I mean to reign
David's true heir, and his full sceptre sway
To just extent over all Israel's sons.
But whence to thee this zeal? Where was it then
For Israel, or for David, or his throne,
When thou stood'st up his tempter to the pride
Of numbering Israel, which cost the lives
Of threescore and ten thousand Israelites
By three days' pestilence? such was thy zeal
To Israel then; the same that now to me!
As for those captive tribes, themselves were they
Who wrought their own captivity, fell off
From God to worship calves, the deities
Of Egypt, Baal next and Ashtaroth,
And all the idolatries of heathen round,
Besides their other worse than heathenish crimes:
Nor in the land of their captivity
Humbled themselves, or penitent besought
The God of their forefathers; but so died
Impenitent, and left a race behind
Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce
From Gentiles, but by circumcision vain,
And God with idols in their worship joined.
Should I of these the liberty regard,
Who, freed, as to their ancient patrimony,
Unhumbled, unrepentant, unreformed,
Headlong would follow; and to their Gods perhaps
Of Bethel and of Dan; no; let them serve
Their enemies, who serve idols with God.
Yet he at length, (time to himself best known,)
Remembering Abraham, by some wondrous call
May bring them back, repentant and sincere,
And at their passing cleave the Assyrian flood,
While to their native land with joy they haste,
As the Red Sea and Jordan once he cleft,
When to the promised land their fathers passed,
To his due time and providence I leave them."

So spake Israel's true king, and to the fiend
Made answer meet, that made void all his wiles.
So fares it when with truth falsehood contends.

BOOK IV.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan persisting in the temptation of our Lord, shows him imperial Rome in its greatest pomp and splendour, as a power which he probably would prefer before that of the Parthians; and tells him that he might with the greatest ease expel Tiberius, restore the Romans to their liberty, and make himself master not only of the Roman empire, but by so doing of the whole world, and inclusively of the throne of David. Our Lord, in reply, expresses his contempt of grandeur and worldly power, notices the luxury, vanity, and profligacy of the Romans, declaring how little they merited to be restored to that liberty, which they had lost by their misconduct, and briefly refers to the greatness of his own future kingdom. Satan, now desperate, to enhance the value of his proffered gifts, professes that the only terms, on which he will bestow them, are our Saviour's falling down and worshipping him. Our Lord expresses a firm but temperate indignation at such a proposition, and rebukes the Tempter by the title of "Satan for ever damned." Satan, abashed, attempts to justify himself; he then assumes a new ground of temptation, and, proposing to Jesus the intellectual gratifications of wisdom and knowledge, points out to him the celebrated seat of ancient learning, Athens, its schools, and other various resorts of learned teachers and their disciples; accompanying the view with a highly-finished panegyric on the Grecian musicians, poets, orators, and philosophers of the different sects. Jesus replies, by showing the vanity and insufficiency of the boasted Heathen philosophy; and prefers to the music, poetry, eloquence, and didactic policy of the Greeks, those of the inspired Hebrew writers. Satan, irritated at the failure of all his attempts, upbraids the indiscretion of our Saviour in rejecting his offers; and having, in ridicule of his expected kingdom, foretold the sufferings that our Lord was to undergo, carries him back into the wilderness, and leaves him there. Night comes on: Satan raises a tremendous storm, and attempts further to alarm Jesus with frightful dreams, and terrific threatening spectres; which however have no effect upon him. A calm, bright, beautiful morning succeeds to the horrors of the night. Satan again presents himself to our blessed Lord, and, from noticing the storm of the preceding night as pointed chiefly at him, takes occasion once more to insult him with an account of the sufferings which he was certainly to undergo. This only draws from our Lord a brief rebuke. Satan, now at the height of his desperation, confesses that he had frequently watched Jesus from his birth, purposely to discover if he was the true Messiah; and, collecting from what passed at the river Jordan that he most probably was so, he had from that time more assiduously followed him, in hopes of gaining some advantage over him, which would most effectually prove that he was not really that Divine Person destined to be his "fatal Enemy." In this he acknowledges that he has hitherto completely failed; but still determines to make one more trial of him. Accordingly he conveys him to the Temple at Jerusalem, and, placing him on a pointed eminence, requires him to prove his Divinity either by standing there, or casting himself down with safety. Our Lord reproves the Tempter, and at the same time manifests his own Divinity by standing on this dangerous point. Satan, amazed and terrified, instantly falls; and repairs to his infernal compeers, to relate the bad success of his enterprise. Angels in the mean time convey our blessed Lord to a beautiful valley, and, while they minister to him a repast of celestial food, celebrate his victory in a triumphant hymn.

Perplexed and troubled at his bad success
The tempter stood, nor had what to reply,
Discovered in his fraud, thrown from his hope
So oft, and the persuasive rhetoric
That sleeked his tongue, and won so much on Eve,
So little here, nay lost; but Eve was Eve;
This far his overmatch, who, self-deceived
And rash, beforehand had no better weighed
The strength he was to cope with, or his own
But as a man, who had been matchless held
In cunning, overreached where least he thought,
To salve his credit, and for very spite,
Still will be tempting him who foils him still,
And never cease, though to his shame the more;
Or as a swarm of flies in vintage time,
About the wine press where sweet must is poured,
Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound;
Or surging waves against a solid rock,
Though all to shivers dashed, the assault renew,
(Vain battery!) and in froth or bubbles end;
So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse
Met ever, and to shameful silence brought,
Yet gives not o'er, though desperate of success,
And his vain importunity pursues.
He brought our Saviour to the western side
Of that high mountain, whence he might behold
Another plain, long, but in breadth not wide,
Washed by the southern sea, and, on the north,
To equal length backed with a ridge of hills,
That screened the fruits of the earth, and seats of men,
From cold septentrion blasts; thence in the midst
Divided by a river, of whose banks
On each side an imperial city stood,
With towers and temples proudly elevate
On seven small hills, with palaces adorned,
Porches, and theatres, baths, aqueducts;
Statues, and trophies, and triumphal arcs,
Gardens and groves presented to his eyes,
Above the height of mountains interposed.
(By what strange parallax, or optic skill
Of vision, multiplied through air, or glass
Of telescope, were curious to inquire:)
And now the Tempter thus his silence broke.
"The city which thou seest no other deem
Than great and glorious Rome, queen of the earth,
So far renowned, and with the spoils enriched
Of nations; there the capitol thou seest;
Above the rest lifting his stately head
On the Tarpeian rock, her citadel
Impregnable; and there mount Palatine,
The imperial palace, compass huge, and high
The constructure, skill of noblest architects,
With gilded battlements conspicuous far,
Turrets, and terraces, and glittering spires.
Many a fair edifice besides, more like
Houses of gods, (so well I have disposed
My airy microscope,) thou mayest behold.
Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs,
Carved work, the hand of famed artificers,
In cedar, marble, ivory, or gold.

Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see
What conflux issuing forth, or entering in;
Prætors, proconsuls to their provinces
Hasting, or on return, in robes of state;
Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power,
Legions and cohorts, turms of horse and wings:
Or embassies from regions far remote;
In various habits, on the Appian road,
Or on the Emilian; some from farthest south,
Syene, and where the shadow both way falls,
Meroe, Nilotic isle, and, more to west,
The realm of Bocchus to the Black-moor sea,
From the Asian kings, and Parthian among these;
From India and the golden Chersonese,
And utmost Indian isle Taprobane,
Dusk faces with white silken turbans wreathed;
From Gallia, Gades, and the British west;
Germans, and Sythians, and Sarmatians, north
Beyond Danubius to the Tauric pool.
All nations now to Rome obedience pay;
To Rome's great emperor, whose wide domain,
In ample territory, wealth, and power,
Civility of manners, arts, and arms,
And long renown, thou justly mayest prefer
Before the Parthians. These two thrones except,
The rest are barbarous, and scarce worth the sight,
Shared among petty kings too far removed;
These having shown thee, I have shown thee all
The kingdoms of the world, and all their glory.
This emperor hath no son, and now is old,
Old and lascivious, and from Rome retired
To Capreæ, an island small, but strong,
On the Campanian shore, with purpose there
His horrid lusts in private to enjoy,
Committing to a wicked favourite
All public cares, and yet of him suspicious;
Hated of all, and hating. With what ease,
Indued with regal virtues as thou art,
Appearing, and beginning noble deeds,
Might'st thou expel this monster from his throne,
Now made a sty; and, in his place ascending,
A victor people free from servile yoke!
And with my help thou mayest; to me the power
Is given, and by that right I give it thee.
Aim therefore at no less than all the world;
Aim at the highest; without the highest attained,
Will be for thee no sitting, or not long,
On David's throne, be prophesied what will."

To whom the Son of God, unmoved, replied.
"Nor doth this grandeur and majestic show
Of luxury, though called magnificence,
More than of arms before, allure mine eye,
Much less my mind; though thou shouldst add to tell
Their sumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feasts
On citron tables or Atlantic stone,
(For I have also heard, perhaps have read,)
Their wines of Setia, Cales, and Falerne,
Chios, and Crete, and how they quaff in gold,
Crystal, and myrrhine cups, embossed with gems
And studs of pearl; to me should'st tell, who thirst
And hunger still. Then embassies thou showest
From nations far and nigh: what honour that,
But tedious waste of time, to sit and hear
So many hollow compliments and lies,
Outlandish flatteries? Then proceed'st to talk
Of the emperor, how easily subdued,
How gloriously: I shall, thou sayest, expel
A brutish monster; what if I withal
Expel a devil who first made him such?
Let his tormentor conscience find him out;
For him I was not sent; nor yet to free
That people, victor once, now vile and base;
Deservedly made vassal, who, once just,
Frugal, and mild, and temperate, conquered well,
But govern ill the nations under yoke,
Peeling their provinces, exhausted all
By lust and rapine; first ambitious grown
Of triumph, that insulting vanity;
Then cruel, by their sports to blood inured
Of fighting beasts, and men to beasts exposed;
Luxurious by their wealth, and greedier still,
And from the daily scene effeminate.
What wise and valiant man would seek to free
These, thus degenerate, by themselves enslaved?
Or could of inward slaves make outward free?
Know therefore, when my season comes to sit
On David's throne, it shall be like a tree
Spreading and overshadowing all the earth;
Or as a stone, that shall to pieces dash
All monarchies besides throughout the world,
And of my kingdom there shall be no end;
Means there shall be to this; but what the means,
Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell."

To whom the Tempter, impudent, replied.
"I see all offers made by me how slight
Thou valuest, because offered, and rejectest:
Nothing will please the difficult and nice,
Or nothing more than still to contradict:
On the other side know also thou, that I
On what I offer set as high esteem,
Nor what I part with mean to give for nought;
All these, which in a moment thou behold'st,
The kingdoms of the world, to thee I give,
(For, given to me, I give to whom I please,)
No trifle; yet with this reserve, not else,
On this condition, if thou wilt fall down,
And worship me as thy superior lord,
(Easily done,) and hold them all of me;
For what can less so great a gift deserve?"

Whom thus our Saviour answered with disdain.
"I never liked thy talk, thy offers less;
Now both abhor, since thou hast dared to utter
The abominable terms, impious condition:
But I endure the time, till which expired
Thou hast permission on me. It is written,
The first of all commandments, Thou shalt worship
The Lord thy God, and only him shalt serve;

And darest thou to the Son of God propound
To worship thee accursed, now more accursed
For this attempt, bolder than that on Eve,
And more blasphemous? which expect to rue.
The kingdoms of the world to thee were given?
Permitted rather, and by thee usurped;
Other donation none thou canst produce.
If given, by whom but by the King of kings
God over all supreme? If given to thee,
By thee how fairly is the giver now
Repaid! But gratitude in thee is lost
Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame,
As offer them to me, the Son of God?
To me my own, on such abhorred pact,
That I fall down and worship thee as God?
Get thee behind me; plain thou now appearest
That evil one, Satan for ever damned."
To whom the Fiend, with fear abashed, replied:
"Be not so sore offended, Son of God,
Though Sons of God both angels are and men,
If I, to try whether in higher sort
Than these thou bearest that title, have proposed
What both from men and angels I receive,
Tetrarchs of fire, air, flood, and on the earth,
Nations beside from all the quartered winds,
God of this world invoked, and world beneath:
Who then thou art, whose coming is foretold
To me most fatal, me it most concerns.
The trial hath endamaged thee no way,
Rather more honoured left and more esteem;
Me nought advantaged, missing what I aimed.
Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,
The kingdoms of this world; I shall no more
Advise thee; gain them as thou canst, or not.
And thou thyself seem'st otherwise inclined
Than to a worldly crown, addicted more
To contemplation and profound dispute,
As by that early action may be judged,
When slipping from thy mother's eye, thou went'st
Alone into the temple, there wast found
Among the gravest Rabbies, disputant
On points and questions fitting Moses' chair,
Teaching, not taught; the childhood shows the man
As morning shows the day. Be famous then
By wisdom; as thy empire must extend,
So let extend thy mind o'er all the world
In knowledge, all things in it comprehend.
All knowledge is not couched in Moses' law,
The Pentateuch, or what the Prophets wrote;
The Gentiles also know, and write, and teach
To admiration, led by nature's light,
And with the Gentiles much thou must converse,
Ruling them by persuasion as thou meanest;
Without their learning how wilt thou with them,
Or they with thee, hold conversation meet?
How wilt thou reason with them, how refute
Their idolisms, traditions, paradoxes?
Error by his own arms is best evinced.
Look once more, ere we leave this specular mount,
Westward, much nearer by south-west, behold
Where on the Egean shore a city stands,
Built nobly, pure the air, and light the soil,
Athens, the eye of Greece, and mother of arts
And eloquence, native to famous wits
Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,
City or suburban, studious walks and shades.
See there the olive grove of Academe,
Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird
Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long;
There flowery hill Hymettus, with the sound
Of bees' industrious murmur, oft invites
To studious musing; there Ilissus rolls
His whispering stream: within the walls, then view
The schools of ancient sages; his, who bred
Great Alexander to subdue the world,
Lyceum there, and painted Stoa next:
There shalt thou hear and learn the secret power
Of harmony, in tones and numbers hit
By voice or hand; and various measured verse,
Æolian charms and Dorian lyric odes,
And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,
Blind Melesigenes, thence Homer called,
Whose poem Phœbus challenged for this own:
Thence what the lofty grave tragedians taught
In Chorus or Iambic, teachers best
Of moral prudence, with delight received
In brief sententious precepts, while they treat
Of fate, and chance, and change in human life,
High actions and high passions best describing:
Thence to the famous orators repair,
Those ancient, whose resistless eloquence
Wielded at will that fierce democratie,
Shook the arsenal, and fulmined over Greece
To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne:
To sage philosophy next lend thine ear,
From Heaven descended to the low-roofed house
Of Socrates; see there his tenement,
Whom well inspired the oracle pronounced
Wisest of men; from whose mouth issued forth
Mellifluous streams, that watered all the schools
Of Academics old and new, with those
Surnamed Peripatetics, and the sect
Epicurean, and the Stoic severe;
These here revolve, or, as thou likest, at home,
Till time mature thee to a kingdom's weight:
These rules will render thee a king complete
Within thyself, much more with empire joined."
To whom our Saviour sagely thus replied:
"Think not but that I know these things, or think
I know them not; not therefore am I short
Of knowing what I ought: he who receives
Light from above, from the fountain of light,
No other doctrine needs, though granted true.
But these are false, or little else but dreams,
Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.
The first and wisest of them all professed
To know this only, that he nothing knew

The next to fabling fell, and smooth conceits;
A third sort doubted all things, though plain sense;
Others in virtue placed felicity,
But virtue joined with riches and long life;
In corporal pleasure he and careless ease;
The Stoic last in philosophic pride,
By him called virtue; and his virtuous man,
Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing
Equal to God, oft shams not to prefer,
As fearing God nor man, contemning all
Wealth, pleasure, pain or torment, death and life,
Which, when he lists, he leaves, or boasts he can,
For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,
Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.
Alas! what can they teach, and not mislead,
Ignorant of themselves, of God much more,
And how the world began, and how man fell
Degraded by himself, on grace depending?
Much of the soul they talk, but all awry,
And in themselves seek virtue, and to themselves
All glory arrogate, to God give none;
Rather accuse him under usual names,
Fortune and fate, as one regardless quite
Of mortal things. Who therefore seeks in these
True wisdom finds her not; or, by delusion,
Far worse, her false resemblance only meets,
An empty cloud. However, many books,
Wise men have said, are wearisome; who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A spirit and judgment equal or superior
(And what he brings, what needs he elsewhere seek?)
Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
Deep versed in books, and shallow in himself,
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys
And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge:
As children gathering pebbles on the shore.
Or, if I would delight my private hours
With music or with poem, where, so soon
As in our native language, can I find
That solace? all our law and story strewed
With hymns, our psalms with artful terms inscribed,
Our Hebrew songs and harps, in Babylon
That pleased so well our victors' ear, declare
That rather Greece from us these arts derived;
Ill imitated, while they loudest sing
The vices of their deities, and their own,
In fable, hymn, or song, so personating
Their gods ridiculous, and themselves past shame.
Remove their swelling epithets, thick laid
As varnish on a harlot's cheek, the rest,
Thin sown with aught of profit or delight,
Will far be found unworthy to compare
With Sion's songs, to all true tastes excelling,
Where God is praised aright, and godlike men,
The Holiest of Holies, and his saints,
(Such are from God inspired, not such from thee,)
Unless where moral virtue is expressed
By light of nature, not in all quite lost.
Their orators thou then extoll'st, as those
The top of eloquence; statists indeed,
And lovers of their country, as may seem
But herein to our prophets far beneath,
As men divinely taught, and better teaching
The solid rules of civil government,
In their majestic unaffected style,
Than all the oratory of Greece and Rome.
In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,
What makes a nation happy, and keeps it so,
What ruins kingdoms, and lays cities flat:
These only with our law best form a king."

So spake the Son of God; but Satan, now
Quite at a loss, for all his darts were spent,
Thus to our Saviour with stern brow replied.
"Since neither wealth nor honour, arms nor arts
Kingdom nor empire pleases thee, nor aught
By me proposed in life contemplative
Or active, tended on by glory or fame,
What dost thou in this world? the wilderness
For thee is fittest place; I found thee there,
And thither will return thee; yet remember
What I foretell thee, soon thou shalt have cause
To wish thou never hadst rejected thus
Nicely or cautiously my offered aid,
Which would have set thee in short time with ease
On David's throne, or throne of all the world,
Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season,
When prophecies of thee are best fulfilled.
Now contrary, if I read aught in Heaven,
Or Heaven write aught of fate, by what the stars
Voluminous, or single characters,
In their conjunction met, give me to spell,
Sorrows, and labours, opposition, hate
Attend thee, scorns, reproaches, injuries,
Violence and stripes, and lastly cruel death;
A kingdom they portend thee, but what kingdom,
Real or allegoric, I discern not;
Nor when; eternal sure, as without end,
Without beginning; for no date prefixed
Directs me in the starry rubric set."

So saying, he took, (for still he knew his power
Not yet expired,) and to the wilderness
Brought back the Son of God, and left him there,
Feigning to disappear. Darkness now rose,
As daylight sunk, and brought in lowering night,
Her shadowy offspring, unsubstantial both,
Privation mere of light and absent day,
Our Saviour meek and with untroubled mind
After his airy jaunt, though hurried sore,
Hungry and cold, betook him to his rest,
Wherever, under some concourse of shades,
Whose branching arms thick intertwined might shield
From dews and damps of night his sheltered head;
But, sheltered, slept in vain; for at his head
The Tempter watched, and soon with ugly dreams
Disturbed his sleep. And either tropic now

Gan thunder, and both ends of Heaven; the clouds,
From many a horrid rift, abortive poured
Fierce rain with lightning mixed, water with fire
In ruin reconciled: nor slept the winds
Within their stony caves, but rushed abroad
From the four hinges of the world, and fell
On the vexed wilderness, whose tallest pines,
Though rooted deep as high, and sturdiest oaks,
Bowed their stiff necks, loaden with stormy blasts,
Or torn up sheer. Ill wast thou shrouded then,
O patient Son of God, yet only stood'st
Unshaken! Nor yet stayed the terror there;
Infernal ghosts, and hellish furies round
Environed thee, some howled, some yelled, some shrieked,
Some bent at thee their fiery darts, while thou
Sat'st unappalled in calm and sinless peace!
Thus passed the night so foul, till morning fair
Came forth, with pilgrim steps, in amice gray,
Who with her radiant finger stilled the roar
Of thunder, chased the clouds, and laid the winds,
And grisly spectres, which the fiend had raised
To tempt the Son of God with terrors dire.
And now the sun with more effectual beams
Had cheered the face of earth, and dried the wet
From drooping plant or dropping tree; the birds,
Who all things now behold more fresh and green,
After a night of storm so ruinous,
Cleared up their choicest notes in bush and spray,
To gratulate the sweet return of morn.
Nor yet, amidst this joy and brightest morn,
Was absent, after all his mischief done,
The prince of darkness; glad would also seem
Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came;
Yet with no new device, (they all were spent,)
Rather by this his last affront resolved,
Desperate of better course, to vent his rage
And mad despite to be so oft repelled.
Him walking on a sunny hill he found,
Backed on the north and west by a thick wood;
Out of the wood he starts in wonted shape,
And in a careless mood thus to him said.
"Fair morning yet betides thee, Son of God,
After a dismal night: I heard the wrack,
As earth and sky would mingle; but myself
Was distant; and these flaws, though mortals fear them
As dangerous to the pillared frame of Heaven,
Or to the earth's dark basis underneath,
Are to the main as inconsiderable
And harmless, if not wholesome as a sneeze
To man's less universe, and soon are gone;
Yet, as being ofttimes noxious where they light
On man, beast, plant, wasteful and turbulent,
Like turbulencies in the affairs of men,
Over whose heads they roar, and seem to point,
They oft foresignify and threaten ill:
This tempest at this desert most was bent,
Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.
Did I not tell thee, if thou did'st reject
The perfect season offered with my aid
To win thy destined seat, but wilt prolong
All to the push of fate, pursue thy way
Of gaining David's throne, no man knows when,
For both the when and how is no where told?
Thou shalt be what thou art ordained, no doubt;
For angels have proclaimed it, but concealing
The time and means. Each act is rightliest done,
Not when it must, but when it may be best:
If thou observe not this, be sure to find,
What I foretold thee, many a hard assay
Of dangers, and adversities, and pains,
Ere thou of Israel's sceptre get fast hold;
Whereof this ominous night, that closed thee round,
So many terrors, voices, prodigies,
May warn thee as a sure foregoing sign."
So talked he, while the Son of God went on
And stayed not, but in brief him answered thus.
"Me worse than wet thou find'st not; other harm
Those terrors which thou speak'st of, did me none;
I never feared they could, though noising loud
And threatening high; what they can do, as signs
Betokening, or ill boding, I contemn
As false portents, not sent from God, but thee;
Who, knowing I shall reign past thy preventing,
Obtrud'st thy offered aid, that I, accepting,
At least might seem to hold all power of thee,
Ambitious spirit! and would'st be thought my God;
And storm'st refused, thinking to terrify
Me to thy will! desist, (thou art discerned,
And toil'st in vain,) nor me in vain molest."
To whom the fiend, now swollen with rage, replied,
"Then hear, O Son of David, virgin-born,
For Son of God to me is yet in doubt;
Of the Messiah I had heard foretold
By all the prophets; of thy birth at length,
Announced by Gabriel, with the first I knew,
And of the angelic song in Bethlehem field,
On thy birthnight, that sung thee Saviour born.
From that time seldom have I ceased to eye
Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,
Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred,
Till at the ford of Jordan, whither all
Flock to the Baptist, I among the rest,
(Though not to be baptized,) by voice from Heaven.
Heard thee pronounced the Son of God beloved.
Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view
And narrower scrutiny, that I might learn
In what degree or meaning thou art called
The Son of God, which bears no single sense.
The Son of God I also am, or was;
And if I was, I am; relation stands;

All men are sons of God; yet thee I thought
In some respect far higher so declared:
Therefore I watched thy footsteps from that hour,
And followed thee still on to this waste wild;
Where, by all best conjectures, I collect
Thou art to be my fatal enemy:
Good reason then, if I beforehand seek
To understand my adversary, who
And what he is; his wisdom, power, intent;
By parle or composition, truce or league,
To win him, or win from him what I can:
An opportunity I here have had
To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee
Proof against all temptation, as a rock
Of adamant, and as a centre firm;
To the utmost of mere man both wise and good,
Not more; for honours, riches, kingdoms, glory,
Have been before contemned, and may again:
Therefore to know what more thou art than man,
Worth naming Son of God by voice from Heaven,
Another method I must now begin."

So saying he caught him up, and, without wing
Of hippogrif, bore through the air sublime,
Over the wilderness and o'er the plain,
Till underneath them fair Jerusalem,
The holy city, lifted high her towers,
And higher yet the glorious temple reared
Her pile, far off appearing like a mount
Of alabaster, topt with golden spires:
There on the highest pinnacle he set
The Son of God; and added thus in scorn.

"There stand, if thou wilt stand; to stand upright
Will ask thee skill; I to thy Father's house
Have brought thee, and highest placed: highest is best:
Now show thy progeny; if not to stand,
Cast thyself down; safely, if Son of God:
For it is written, 'He will give command
Concerning thee to his angels, in their hands
They shall uplift thee, lest at any time
Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone.'"

To whom thus Jesus. "Also it is written,
'Tempt not the Lord thy God:'" he said, and stood:
But Satan, smitten with amazement, fell.
As when earth's son Antæus (to compare
Small things with greatest) in Irassa strove
With Jove's Alcides, and, oft foiled, still rose,
Receiving from his mother earth new strength,
Fresh from his fall, and fiercer grapple joined,
Throttled at length in the air, expired and fell;
So, after many a foil, the Tempter proud,
Renewing fresh assaults amidst his pride,
Fell whence he stood to see his victor fall:
And as that Theban monster, that proposed
Her riddle, and him, who solved it not devoured,
That once found out and solved, for grief and spite
Cast herself headlong from the Ismenian steep;
So, struck with dread and anguish, fell the fiend,
And to his crew, that sat consulting, brought
(Joyless triumphals of his hoped success)
Ruin, and desperation, and dismay,
Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God.
So Satan fell; and straight a fiery globe
Of angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,
Who on their plumy vans received him soft
From his uneasy station, and upbore,
As on a floating couch, through the blithe air;
Then, in a flowery valley, set him down
On a green bank, and set before him spread
A table of celestial food, divine
Ambrosial fruits, fetched from the tree of life,
And, from the fount of life, ambrosial drink,
That soon refreshed him wearied, and repaired
What hunger, if aught hunger had impaired,
Or thirst; and, as he fed, angelic choirs
Sung heavenly anthems of his victory
Over temptation and the tempter proud.

"True image of the Father; whether throned
In the bosom of bliss, and light of light
Conceiving, or, remote from Heaven, inshrined
In fleshly tabernacle, and human form,
Wandering the wilderness; whatever place,
Habit, or state, or motion, still expressing
The Son of God, with godlike force endued
Against thy attempter of thy Father's throne,
And thief of Paradise! him long of old
Thou did'st debel, and down from Heaven cast
With all his army; now thou hast avenged
Supplanted Adam, and, by vanquishing
Temptation, hast regained lost Paradise,
And frustrated the conquest fraudulent.
He never more henceforth will dare set foot
In Paradise to tempt; his snares are broke:
For, though that seat of earthly bliss be failed,
A fairer Paradise is founded now
For Adam and his chosen sons, whom thou,
A Saviour, art come down to reinstal,
Where they shall dwell secure, when time shall be
Of tempter and temptation without fear.
But thou, infernal serpent! shalt not long
Rule in the clouds; like an autumnal star,
Or lightning, thou shalt fall from Heaven, trod down
Under his feet; for proof, ere this thou feel'st
Thy wound, (yet not thy last and deadliest wound,)
By this repulse received, and hold'st in hell
No triumph; in all her gates Abaddon rues
Thy bold attempt. Hereafter learn with awe
To dread the Son of God: he, all unarmed,
Shall chase thee with the terror of his voice
From thy demoniac holds, possession foul,
Thee and thy legions; yelling they shall fly
And beg to hide them in a herd of swine,
Lest he command them down into the deep,

Bound, and to torment sent before their time.—
Hail, Son of the Most High, heir of both worlds,
Queller of Satan! on thy glorious work,
Now enter, and begin to save mankind."

Thus they the Son of God, our Saviour meek,
Sung victor, and from heavenly feast refreshed,
Brought on his way with joy; he unobserved,
Home to his mother's house private returned.

Samson Agonistes,

A

DRAMATIC POEM.

Τραγωδια μιμησις πραξεως σπουδαιας, κ. τ. λ.
Aristot. Poet. Cap. 6.

Tragœdia est imitatio actionis seriæ, &c. per misericordiam et metum perficiens talium affectuum lustrationem.

THE ARGUMENT.

Samson, made captive, blind, and now in the prison at Gaza, there to labour as in a common workhouse, on a festival day, in the general cessations from labour, comes forth into the open air, to a place nigh, somewhat retired, there to sit awhile and bemoan his condition. Where he happens at length to be visited by certain friends and equals of his tribe, which make the Chorus, who seek to comfort him what they can; then by his old father Manoah, who endeavours the like, and withal tells him his purpose to procure his liberty by ransom; lastly, that this feast was proclaimed by the Philistines as a day of thanksgiving for their deliverance from the hands of Samson, which yet more troubles him. Manoah then departs to prosecute his endeavour with the Philistine lords for Samson's redemption; who in the mean-while is visited by other persons; and lastly by a public officer to require his coming to the feast before the lords and people, to play or show his strength in their presence; he at first refuses, dismissing the public officer with absolute denial to come; at length, persuaded inwardly that this was from God, he yields to go along with him, who came now the second time with great threatenings to fetch him: the Chorus yet remaining on the place, Manoah returns full of joyful hope, to procure ere long his son's deliverance: in the midst of which discourse an Hebrew comes in haste, confusedly at first, and afterwards more distinctly, relating the catastrophe, what Samson had done to the Philistines, and by accident to himself; wherewith the tragedy ends.

THE PERSONS.

Samson.
Manoah, *the Father of Samson.*
Dalila, *his wife.*
Harapha *of Gath.*
Public Officer.
Messenger.
Chorus of Danites.

The *Scene* before the Prison in Gaza.

SAMSON AGONISTES.

Samson, [*Attendant leading him.*]

A little onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little further on;
For yonder bank hath choice of sun or shade:
There I am wont to sit when any chance
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,
Daily in the common prison else enjoined me,
Where I, a prisoner chained, scarce freely draw
The air imprisoned also, close and damp,
Unwholesome draught: but here I feel amends,
The breath of Heaven fresh blowing, pure and sweet,
With dayspring born; here leave me to respire.
This day a solemn feast the people hold
To Dagon their sea idol, and forbid
Laborious works; unwillingly this rest
Their superstition yields me; hence with leave
Retiring from the popular noise, I seek
This unfrequented place to find some ease,
Ease to the body some, none to the mind
From restless thoughts, that, like a deadly swarm
Of hornets armed, no sooner found alone,
But rush upon me thronging, and present
Times past, what once I was, and what am now
O wherefore was my birth from Heaven foretold
Twice by an angel, who at last in sight
Of both my parents all in flames ascended
From off the altar, where an offering burned,
As in a fiery column charioting
His godlike presence, and from some great act
Or benefit revealed to Abraham's race?
Why was my breeding ordered and prescribed
As of a person separate to God,
Designed for great exploits; if I must die
Betrayed, captived, and both my eyes put out,
Made of my enemies the scorn and gaze,
To grind in brazen fetters under task
With this heaven-gifted strength? O glorious strength,
Put to the labour of a beast, debased
Lower than bondslave! Promise was that I
Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver;
Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him
Eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves,
Himself in bonds under Philistian yoke;

Yet stay, let me not rashly call in doubt
Divine prediction; what if all foretold
Had been fulfilled but through mine own default,
Whom have I to complain of but myself,
Who this high gift of strength committed to me,
In what part lodged, how easily bereft me,
Under the seal of silence could not keep,
But weakly to a woman must reveal it,
O'ercome with importunity and tears?
O impotence of mind, in body strong!
But what is strength without a double share
Of wisdom? vast, unwieldy, burdensome,
Proudly secure, yet liable to fall
By weakest subtleties; not made to rule,
But to subserve where wisdom bears command!
God, when he gave me strength, to show withal
How slight the gift was, hung it in my hair.
But peace, I must not quarrel with the will
Of highest dispensation, which herein
Haply had ends above my reach to know;
Suffices that to me strength is my bane,
And proves the source of all my miseries;
So many, and so huge, that each apart
Would ask a life to wail; but chief of all,
O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!
Blind among enemies, O worse than chains,
Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit age!
Light, the prime work of God, to me is extinct,
And all her various objects of delight
Annulled, which might in part my grief have eased,
Inferior to the vilest now become
Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me;
They creep, yet see; I, dark in light, exposed
To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,
Within doors, or without, still as a fool,
In power of others, never in my own;
Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.
O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse
Without all hope of day!
O first created beam, and thou great Word,
"Let there be light, and light was over all;"
Why am I thus bereaved thy prime decree?
The sun to me is dark,
And silent as the moon,
When she deserts the night,
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
Since light so necessary is to life,
And almost life itself, if it be true
That light is in the soul,
She all in every part; why was the sight
To such a tender ball as the eye confined,
So obvious and so easy to be quenched?
And not, as feeling, through all parts diffused,
That she might look at will through every pore?
Then had I not been thus exiled from light
As in the land of darkness, yet in light,
To live a life half dead, a living death,
And buried; but, O yet more miserable!
Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave;
Buried, yet not exempt,
By privilege of death and burial,
From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs;
But made hereby obnoxious more
To all the miseries of life,
Life in captivity
Among inhuman foes.
But who are these? for with joint pace I hear
The tread of many feet steering this way;
Perhaps my enemies, who come to stare
At my affliction, and perhaps to insult,
Their daily practice to afflict me more.

[Enter] *Chorus.*

Chor. This, this is he: softly awhile,
Let us not break in upon him:
O change beyond report, thought, or belief!
See how he lies at random, carelessly diffused,
With languished head unpropt,
As one past hope, abandoned,
And by himself given over;
In slavish habit, ill-fitted weeds
O'erworn and soiled;
Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,
That heroic, that renowned,
Irresistible Samson? whom unarmed
No strength of man or fiercest wild beast could withstand;
Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid;
Ran on embattled armies clad in iron,
And, weaponless himself,
Made arms ridiculous, useless the forgery
Of brazen shield and spear, the hammered cuirass,
Chalybean tempered steel, and frock of mail
Adamantean proof?
But safest he who stood aloof,
When insupportably his foot advanced,
In scorn of their proud arms and warlike tools,
Spurned them to death by troops. The bold Ascalonite
Fled from his lion ramp; old warriors turned
Their plated backs under his heel;
Or, groveling, soiled their crested helmets in the dust.
Then with what trivial weapon come to hand,
The jaw of a dead ass, his sword of bone,
A thousand foreskins fell, the flower of Palestine,
In Rameth-lechi famous to this day,
Then by main force pulled up, and on his shoulders bore
The gates of Azza, post, and massy bar,
Up to the hill by Hebron, seat of giants old.
No journey of a Sabbath day, and loaded so;
Like whom the Gentiles feign to bear up Heaven.
Which shall I first bewail,
Thy bondage, or lost sight,
Prison within prison

Inseparably dark?
Thou art become (O worst imprisonment!)
The dungeon of thyself; thy soul,
(Which men enjoying sight oft without cause complain,)
Imprisoned now indeed,
In real darkness of the body dwells,
Shut up from outward light
To incorporate with gloomy night;
For inward light, alas!
Puts forth no visual beam.
O mirror of our fickle state,
Since man on earth unparalleled!
The rarer thy example stands,
By how much from the top of wondrous glory,
Strongest of mortal men,
To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fallen.
For him I reckon not in high estate
Whom long descent of birth,
Or the sphere of fortune, raises;
But thee whose strength, while virtue was her mate,
Might have subdued the earth,
Universally crowned with highest praises.

Sams. I hear the sound of words; their sense the air
Dissolves unjointed ere it reach my ear.

Chor. He speaks, let us draw nigh. Matchless in might,
The glory late of Israel, now the grief;
We come thy friends and neighbours not unknown,
From Eshtaol and Zora's fruitful vale,
To visit or bewail thee; or, if better,
Counsel or consolation we may bring,
Salve to thy sores: apt words have power to swage
The tumours of a troubled mind.
And are as balm to festered wounds.

Sams. Your coming, friends, revives me, for I learn
Now of my own experience, not by talk,
How counterfeit a coin they are who friends
Bear in their superscription, (of the most
I would be understood;) in prosperous days
They swarm, but in adverse withdraw their head,
Not to be found, though sought. Ye see, O friends,
How many evils have enclosed me round:
Yet that which was the worst now least afflicts me,
Blindness; for had I sight, confused with shame,
How could I once look up, or heave the head,
Who, like a foolish pilot, have shipwrecked
My vessel trusted to me from above,
Gloriously rigged; and for a word, a tear,
Fool! have divulged the secret gift of God
To a deceitful woman? tell me, friends,
Am I not sung and proverbed for a fool
In every street? do they not say, how well
Are come upon him his deserts? yet why?
Immeasurable strength they might behold
In me, of wisdom nothing more than mean;
This with the other should, at least, have paired,
These two, proportioned ill, drove me transverse.

Chor. Tax not divine disposal; wisest men
Have erred, and by bad women been deceived;
And shall again, pretend they ne'er so wise.
Deject not then so overmuch thyself,
Who hast of sorrow thy full load besides;
Yet, truth to say, I oft have heard men wonder
Why thou should'st wed Philistian woman rather
Than of thine own tribe fairer, or as fair,
At least of thy own nation, and as noble.

Sams. The first I saw at Timna, and she pleased
Me, not my parents, that I sought to wed
The daughter of an infidel: they knew not
That what I mentioned was of God: I knew
From intimate impulse, and therefore urged
The marriage on; that by occasion hence
I might begin Israel's deliverance,
The work to which I was divinely called.
She proving false, the next I took to wife
(O that I never had! fond wish too late)
Was in the vale of Sorec, Dalila,
That specious monster, my accomplished snare.
I thought it lawful from my former act,
And the same end; still watching to oppress
Israel's oppressors: of what now I suffer
She was not the prime cause, but I myself,
Who, vanquished with a peal of words, (O weakness!)
Gave up my fort of silence to a woman.

Chor. In seeking just occasion to provoke
The Philistine, thy country's enemy,
Thou never wast remiss, I bear thee witness:
Yet Israel still serves with all his sons.

Sams. That fault I take not on me, but transfer
On Israel's governors, and heads of tribes,
Who, seeing those great acts which God had done
Singly by me against their conquerors,
Acknowledged not, or not at all considered,
Deliverance offered: I on the other side
Used no ambition to commend my deeds;
The deeds themselves, though mute, spoke loud the doer:
But they persisted deaf, and would not seem
To count them things worth notice, till at length
Their lords the Philistines with gathered powers
Entered Judea seeking me, who then
Safe to the rock of Etham was retired;
Not flying, but forecasting in what place
To set upon them, what advantaged best:
Meanwhile the men of Judah, to prevent
The harass of their land, beset me round:
I willingly on some conditions came
Into their hands, and they as gladly yield me
To the uncircumcised a welcome prey,
Bound with two cords; but cords to me were threads
Touched with the flame: on their whole host I flew

Unarmed, and with a trivial weapon felled
Their choicest youth; they only lived who fled.
Had Judah that day joined, or one whole tribe,
They had by this possessed the towers of Gath,
And lorded over them whom they now serve:
But what more oft, in nations grown corrupt,
And by their vices brought to servitude,
Than to love bondage more than liberty,
Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty:
And to despise, or envy, or suspect
Whom God hath of his special favour raised
As their deliverer; if he aught begin,
How frequent to desert him, and at last
To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds?

Chor. Thy words to my remembrance bring
How Succoth and the fort of Penuel
Their great deliverer contemned,
The matchless Gideon, in pursuit
Of Madian and her vanquished kings:
And how ingrateful Ephraim
Had dealt with Jephtha, who by argument,
Not worse than by his shield and spear,
Defended Israel from the Ammonite,
Had not his prowess quelled their pride
In that sore battle, when so many died
Without reprieve, adjudged to death,
For want of well pronouncing Shibboleth.

Sams. Of such example add me to the roll;
Me easily indeed mine may neglect,
But God's proposed deliverance not so.

Chor. Just are the ways of God,
And justifiable to men;
Unless there be who think not God at all:
If any be, they walk obscure;
For of such doctrine never was their school,
But the heart of the fool,
And no man therein doctor but himself.

Yet more they be, who doubt his ways not just,
As to his own edicts found contradicting,
Then give the reigns to wandering thought,
Regardless of his glory's diminution;
Till by their own perplexities involved,
They ravel more, still less resolved,
But never find self-satisfying solution.

As if they would confine the Interminable,
And tie him to his own prescript,
Who made our laws to bind us, not himself,
And hath full right to exempt
Whom so it pleases him by choice
From national obstriction, without taint
Of sin, or legal debt;
For with his own laws he can best dispense.

He would not else, who never wanted means,
Nor in respect of the enemy just cause,
To set his people free,
Have prompted this heroic Nazarite,
Against his vow of strictest purity,
To seek in marriage that fallacious bride,
Unclean, unchaste

Down, reason, then; at least, vain reasonings, down;
Though reason here aver,
That moral verdict quits her of unclean:
Unchaste was subsequent, her stain not his.

But see here comes thy reverend sire
With careful step, locks white as down,
Old Manoah: advise
Forthwith how thou ought'st to receive him.

Sams. Ay me, another inward grief, awaked
With mention of that name, renews the assault.

[Enter] *Manoah.*

Man. Brethren and men of Dan, for such ye seem,
Though in this uncouth place; if old respect,
As I suppose, towards your once gloried friend,
My son, now captive, hither hath informed
Your younger feet, while mine cast back with age
Came lagging after; say if he be here.

Chor. As signal now in low dejected state,
As erst in highest, behold him where he lies.

Man. O miserable change! is this the man,
That invincible Samson, far renowned,
The dread of Israel's foes, who with a strength
Equivalent to angels walked their streets,
None offering fight; who single combatant
Duelled their armies ranked in proud array,
Himself an army, now unequal match
To save himself against a coward armed
At one spear's length. O everfailing trust
In mortal strength! and oh! what not in man
Deceivable and vain? Nay, what thing good
Prayed for, but often proves our wo, our bane?
I prayed for children, and thought barrenness
In wedlock a reproach; I gained a son,
And such a son as all men hailed me happy;
Who would be now a father in my stead?
O wherefore did God grant me my request,
And as a blessing with such pomp adorned?
Why are his gifts desirable, to tempt
Our earnest prayers, then, given with solemn hand
As graces, draw a scorpion's tail behind?
For this did the angel twice descend? for this
Ordained thy nurture holy, as of a plant
Select, and sacred, glorious for awhile,
The miracle of men; then in an hour
Insnared, assaulted, overcome, led bound,
Thy foes' derision, captive, poor, and blind,
Into a dungeon thrust, to work with slaves?
Alas! methinks whom God hath chosen once
To worthiest deeds, if he through frailty err,
He should not so o'erwhelm, and as a thrall
Subject him to foul indignities,
Be it but for honour's sake of former deeds.

Sams. Appoint not heavenly disposition,* father;

* Appoint *not heavenly disposition.*"—Arraign not—summon not to answer.

Nothing of all these evils hath befallen me
But justly: I myself have brought them on,
Sole author I, sole cause: if aught seem vile,
As vile hath been my folly, who have profaned
The mystery of God given me under pledge
Of vow, and have betrayed it to a woman,
A Canaanite, my faithless enemy.
This well I knew, nor was at all surprised,
But warned by oft experience: did not she
Of Timna first betray me, and reveal
The secret wrested from me in her height
Of nuptial love professed, carry it straight
To them who had corrupted her, my spies,
And rivals? In this other was there found
More faith, who also in her prime of love,
Spousal embraces, vitiated with gold,
Though offered only, by the scent conceived
Her spurious first-born, treason against me?
Thrice she assayed with flattering prayers and sighs,
And amorous reproaches, to win from me
My capital secret, in what part my strength
Lay stored, in what part summed, that she might know
Thrice I deluded her, and turned to sport
Her importunity, each time perceiving
How openly, and with what impudence
She purposed to betray me, and (which was worse
Than undissembled hate) with what contempt
She sought to make me traitor to myself;
Yet the fourth time, when, mustering all her wiles,
With blandished parleys, feminine assaults,
Tongue batteries, she surceased not, day nor night
To storm me overwatched, and wearied out,
At times when men seek most repose and rest
I yielded, and unlocked her all my heart,
Who, with a grain of manhood well resolved,
Might easily have shook off all her snares:
But foul effeminacy held me yoked
Her bondslave; O indignity, O blot,
To honour and religion! servile mind
Rewarded well with servile punishment!
The base degree to which I now am fallen,
These rags, this grinding is not yet so base
As was my former servitude ignoble,
Unmanly, ignominious, infamous,
True slavery, and that blindness worse than this,
That saw not how degenerately I served.

Man. I can not praise thy marriage choices, son,
Rather approved them not; but thou didst plead
Divine impulsion prompting how thou might'st
Find some occasion to infest our foes.
I state not that; this I am sure, our foes
Found soon occasion thereby to make thee
Their captive, and their triumph; thou the sooner
Temptation foundest, or over potent charms,
To violate the sacred trust of silence
Deposited within thee; which to have kept
Tacit, was in thy power: true; and thou bearest
Enough, and more, the burden of that fault
Bitterly hast thou paid, and still art paying,
That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains;
This day the Philistines a popular feast
Here celebrate in Gaza; and proclaim
Great pomp, and sacrifice, and praises loud,
To Dagon as their God, who hath delivered
Thee, Samson, bound and blind into their hands,
Them out of thine, who slewest them many a slain,
So Dagon shall be magnified, and God,
Besides whom is no God, compared with idols,
Disglorified, blasphemed, and had in scorn
By the idolatrous rout amidst their wine;
Which to have come to pass by means of thee,
Samson, of all thy sufferings, think the heaviest,
Of all reproach the most with shame that ever
Could have befallen thee and thy father's house.

Sams. Father, I do acknowledge and confess
That I this honour, I this pomp have brought
To Dagon, and advanced his praises high
Among the Heathen round; to God have brought
Dishonour, obloquy, and oped the mouths
Of idolists and atheists; have brought scandal
To Israel, diffidence of God, and doubt
In feeble hearts, propense enough before
To waver, or fall off and join with idols;
Which is my chief affliction, shame and sorrow
The anguish of my soul, that suffers not
Mine eye to harbour sleep, or thoughts to rest.
This only hope relieves me, that the strife
With me hath end; all the contest is now
'Twixt God and Dagon; Dagon hath presumed,
Me overthrown, to enter lists with God,
His deity comparing and preferring
Before the God of Abraham. He, be sure,
Will not connive, or linger, thus provoked,
But will arise, and his great name assert:
Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
Such a discomfit as shall quite despoil him
Of all these boasted trophies won on me,
And with confusing blank his worshippers.

Man. With cause this hope relieves thee, and these words
I as a prophecy receive; for God,
Nothing more certain, will not long defer
To vindicate the glory of his name
Against all competition, nor will long
Endure it doubtful whether God be Lord,
Or Dagon. But for thee what shall be done?
Thou must not, in the meanwhile, here forgot,
Lie in this miserable loathsome plight,
Neglected. I already have made way
To some Philistian lords, with whom to treat
About thy ransom: well they may by this
Have satisfied their utmost of revenge
By pains and slaveries, worse than death, inflicted
On thee, who now no more canst do them harm

Sams. Spare that proposal, father; spare the trouble

Of that solicitation; let me here,
As I deserve, pay on my punishment;
And expiate, if possible, my crime,
Shameful garrulity. To have revealed
Secrets of men, the secrets of a friend,
How heinous had the fact been, how deserving
Contempt, and scorn of all, to be excluded
All friendship, and avoided as a blab,
The mark of fool set on his front?
But I God's counsel have not kept, his holy secret
Presumptuously have published, impiously,
Weakly at least, and shamefully; a sin
That Gentiles in their parables condemn
To their abyss and horrid pains confined.

Man. Be penitent, and for thy fault contrit
But act not in thy own affliction, son:
Repent the sin; but, if the punishment
Thou canst avoid, self preservation bids;
Or the execution leave to high disposal,
And let another hand, not thine, exact
Thy penal forfeit from thyself: perhaps
God will relent, and quit thee all his debt;
Who ever more approves, and more accepts,
(Best pleased with humble and filial submission,)
Him, who, imploring mercy, sues for life,
Than who, self-rigorous, chooses death as due;
Which argues overjust, and self-displeased,
For self-offence, more than for God offended.
Reject not then what offered means, who knows
But God hath set before us, to return thee
Home to thy country and his sacred house,
Where thou may'st bring thy offerings, to avert
His further ire, with prayers and vows renewed?

Sams. His pardon I implore; but as for life
To what end should I seek it? when in strength
All mortals I excelled, and great in hopes
With youthful courage, and magnanimous thoughts
Of birth from Heaven foretold, and high exploits,
Full of divine instinct, after some proof
Of acts indeed heroic, far beyond
The sons of Anak, famous now and blazed
Fearless of danger, like a petty god
I walked about admired of all and dreaded
On hostile ground, none daring my affront.*
Then swollen with pride into the snare I fell
Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,
Softened with pleasure and voluptuous life;
At length to lay my head and hallowed pledge
Of all my strength in the lascivious lap
Of a deceitful concubine, who shore me
Like a tame wether, all my precious fleece,
Then turned me out ridiculous, despoiled,
Shaven, and disarmed among mine enemies.

Chor. Desire of wine and all delicious drinks,
Which many a famous warrior overturns,
Thou could'st repress; nor did the dancing ruby
Sparkling, outpoured, the flavour or the smell,
Or taste that cheers the heart of gods and men,
Allure thee from the cool crystalline stream.

Sams. Wherever fountain or fresh current flowed
Against the eastern ray, translucent, pure,
With touch ethereal of Heaven's fiery rod,
I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying
Thirst, and refreshed: nor envied them the grape
Whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.

Chor. O madness, to think use of strongest wines
And strongest drinks, our chief support of health,
When God with these forbidden made choice to rear
His mighty champion, strong above compare,
Whose drink was only from the liquid brook.

Sams. But what availed this temperance, not complete
Against another object more enticing?
What boots it at one gate to make defence,
And at another to let in the foe,
Effeminately vanquished? by which means,
Now blind, disheartened, shamed, dishonoured, quelled,
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heaven imposed,
But to sit idle on the household hearth,
A burdenous drone; to visitants a gaze,
Or pitied object, these redundant locks
Robustious to no purpose clustering down,
Vain monument of strength; till length of years
And sedentary numbness craze thy limbs
To a contemptible old age obscure?
Here rather let me drudge and earn my bread;
Till vermin or the draff of servile food,
Consume me, and oft invocated death
Hasten the welcome end of all my pains.

Man. Wilt thou then serve the Philistines with that gift
Which was expressly given thee to annoy them?
Better at home lie bedrid, not only idle,
Inglorious, unemployed, with age outworn.
But God, who caused a fountain at thy prayer
From the dry ground to spring, thy thirst to allay
After the brunt of battle, can as easy
Cause light again within thy eyes to spring,
Wherewith to serve him better than thou hast;
And I persuade me so; why else this strength
Miraculous yet remaining in those locks?
His might continues in thee not for naught,
Nor shall his wondrous gifts be frustrate thus.

Sams. All otherwise to me my thoughts portend,
That these dark orbs no more shall treat with light,
Nor the other light of life continue long,
But yield to double darkness nigh at hand:

* "*None daring my affront*"—to front or face in a hostile manner.

So much I feel my genial spirits droop,
My hopes all flat, nature within me seems
In all her functions weary of herself;
My race of glory run, and race of shame,
And I shall shortly be with them that rest.
Man. Believe not these suggestions, which proceed
From anguish of the mind and humours black,
That mingle with my fancy. I however
Must not omit a father's timely care
To prosecute the means of thy deliverance
By ransom, or how else: meanwhile be calm,
And healing words from these thy friends admit.
[*Exit.*
Sams. O that torment should not be confined
To the body's wounds and sores,
With maladies innumerable
In heart, head, breast, and reins;
But must secret passage find
To the inmost mind,
There exercise all his fierce accidents,
And on her purest spirits prey,
As on entrails, joints, and limbs,
With answerable pains, but more intense,
Though void of corporal sense.
My griefs not only pain me
As a lingering disease,
But, finding no redress, ferment and rage;
Nor less than wounds immedicable
Rankle, and fester, and gangrene,
To black mortification.
Thoughts, my tormentors, armed with deadly stings,
Mangle my apprehensive tenderest parts,
Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise
Dire inflammation, which no cooling herb
Or medicinal liquor can assuage,
Nor breath of vernal air from snowy Alp.
Sleep hath forsook and given me o'er
To death's benumbing opium as my only cure;
Thence faintings, swoonings of despair,
And sense of Heaven's desertion.
I was his nursling once, and choice delight,
His destined from the womb,
Promised by heavenly message twice descending.
Under his special eye
Abstemious I grew up, and thrived amain;
He led me on to mightiest deeds,
Above the nerve of mortal arm,
Against the uncircumcised, our enemies:
But now hath cast me off as never known,
And to those cruel enemies:
Whom I by his appointment had provoked,
Left me all helpless with the irreparable loss
Of sight, reserved alive to be repeated,
The subject of their cruelty or scorn.
Nor am I in the list of them that hope;
Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless:
This once prayer yet remains, might I be heard,
No long petition, speedy death,
The close of all my miseries, and the balm.
Chor. Many are the sayings of the wise,
In ancient and in modern books enrolled,
Extolling patience as the truest fortitude;
And to the bearing well of all calamities,
All chances incident to man's frail life,
Consolatories writ
With studied argument, and much persuasion sought,
Lenient of grief and anxious thought:
But with the afflicted in his pangs their sound
Little prevails, or rather seems a tune
Harsh, and of dissonant mood from his complaint;
Unless he feel within
Some source of consolation from above,
Secret refreshings, that repair his strength
And fainting spirits uphold.
God of our fathers, what is man!
That thou towards him with hand so various
Or might I say contrarious,
Temperest thy providence through his short course
Not evenly, as thou rulest
The angelic orders, and inferior creatures mute,
Irrational and brute.
Nor do I name of men the common rout,
That wandering loose about
Grow up and perish as the summer fly
Heads without name no more remembered;
But such as thou hast solemnly elected,
With gifts and graces eminently adorned,
To some great work, thy glory,
And people's safety, which in part they effect:
Yet toward these thus dignified, thou oft,
Amidst their height of noon,
Changest thy countenance, and thy hand, with no regard
Of highest favours past
From thee on them, or them to thee of service.
Nor only dost degrade them, or remit
To life obscured, which were a fair dismission,
But throwest them lower than thou didst exalt them high;
Unseemly falls in human eye,
Too grievous for the trespass or omission;
Oft leavest them to the hostile sword
Of heathen and profane, their carcasses
To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captived;
Or to the unjust tribunals, under change of times,
And condemnation of the ingrateful multitude.
If these they 'scape, perhaps in poverty
With sickness and disease thou bow'st them down,
Painful diseases and deformed
In crude old age;
Though not disordinate, yet causeless suffering
The punishment of dissolute days: in fine
Just or unjust alike seem miserable,
For oft alike both come to evil end.
So deal not with this once thy glorious champion

The image of thy strength, and mighty minister.
What do I beg? how hast thou dealt already!
Behold him in this state calamitous, and turn
His labours, for thou canst, to peaceful end.
But who is this? what thing of sea or land?
Female of sex it seems,
That so bedecked, ornate, and gay,
Comes this way sailing
Like a stately ship
Of Tarsus, bound for the isles
Of Javan or Gadire,
With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,
Sails filled, and streamers waving,
Courted by all the winds that hold them play.
An amber scent of odorous perfume
Her harbinger, a damsel train behind;
Some rich Philistian matron she may seem;
And now at nearer view, no other certain
Than Dalila, thy wife.

Sams. My wife! my traitress: let her not come near me.

Chor. Yet on she moves, now stands and eyes thee fixed,
About to have spoke; but now, with head declined,
Like a fair flower surcharged with dew, she weeps,
And words addressed seem into tears dissolved,
Wetting the borders of her silken veil:
But now again she makes address to speak.

[Enter] *Dalila.*

Dal. With doubtful feet and wavering resolution
I came, still dreading thy displeasure, Samson,
Which to have merited, without excuse,
I can not but acknowledge; yet, if tears,
May expiate, (though the fact more evil drew
In the perverse event than I foresaw,)
My penance hath not slackened, though my pardon
No way assured. But conjugal affection,
Prevailing over fear and timorous doubt,
Hath led me on, desirous to behold
Once more thy face, and know of thy estate,
If aught in my ability may serve
To lighten what thou sufferest, and appease
Thy mind with what amends is in my power,
Though late, yet in some part to recompense
My rash, but more unfortunate misdeed.

Sams. Out, out, hyena! these are thy wonted arts,
And arts of every woman false like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,
Then as repentant to submit, beseech,
And reconcilement move with feigned remorse,
Confess, and promise wonders in her change;
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her husband, how far urged his patience bears,
His virtue or weakness which way to assail;
Then with more cautious and instructed skill
Again transgresses, and again submits;
That wisest and best men, full oft beguiled,
With goodness principled not to reject
The penitent, but ever to forgive,
Are drawn to wear out miserable days,
Entangled with a poisonous bosom snake,
If not by quick destruction soon cut off,
As I by thee, to ages an example.

Dal. Yet hear me, Samson; not that I endeavour
To lessen or extenuate my offence,
But that on the other side, if it be weighed
By itself, with aggravations not surcharged,
Or else with just allowance counterpoised,
I may, if possible, thy pardon find
The easier toward me, or thy hatred less.
First granting, as I do, it was a weakness
In me, but incident to all our sex,
Curiosity, inquisitive, importune
Of secrets, then with like infirmity
To publish them, both common female faults:
Was it not weakness also to make known
For importunity, that is, for nought,
Wherein consisted all thy strength and safety?
To what I did thou showed'st me first the way.
But I to enemies revealed, and should not:
Nor should'st thou have trusted that to woman's frailty;
Ere I to thee, thou to thyself wast cruel.
Let weakness then with weakness come to parle,
So near related, or the same of kind,
Thine forgive mine; that men may censure thine
The gentler, if severely thou exact not
More strength from me, than in thyself was found.
And what if love, which thou interpret'st hate,
The jealousy of love, powerful of sway
In human hearts, nor less in mine towards thee,
Caused what I did? I saw thee mutable
Of fancy, feared lest one day thou would'st leave me
As her at Timna, sought by all means therefore
How to endear, and hold thee to me firmest:
No better way I saw than by importuning
To learn thy secrets, get into my power
Thy key of strength and safety: thou wilt say,
Why then revealed? I was assured by those
Who tempted me, that nothing was designed
Against thee but safe custody, and hold:
That made for me, I knew that liberty
Would draw thee forth to perilous enterprises;
While I at home sat full of cares and fears,
Wailing thy absence in my widowed bed;
Here I should still enjoy thee, day and nigh
Mine and love's prisoner, not the Philistines',
Whole to myself, unhazarded abroad,
Fearless at home of partners in my love.
These reasons in love's law have past for good,
Though fond and reasonless to some perhaps;
And love hath oft, well meaning, wrought much wo,

Yet always pity or pardon hath obtained.
But not like all others, not austere
As thou art strong, inflexible as steel.
If thou in strength all mortals dost exceed,
In uncompassionate anger do not so.

Sams. How cunningly the sorceress displays
Her own transgressions, to upbraid me mine!
That malice, not repentance, brought thee hither,
By this appears; I gave, thou say'st, the example,
I led the way; bitter reproach, but true;
I to myself was false ere thou to me;
Such pardon therefore as I give my folly,
Take to thy wicked deed; which when thou seest
Impartial, self-severe, inexorable,
Thou wilt renounce thy seeking, and much rather
Confess it feigned: weakness is thy excuse,
And I believe it; weakness to resist
Philistian gold: if weakness may excuse,
What murderer, what traitor, parricide,
Incestuous, sacrilegious, but may plead it?
All wickedness is weakness: that plea therefore
With God or man will gain thee no remission.
But love constrained thee; call it furious rage
To satisfy thy lust: love seeks to have love;
My love how could'st thou hope, who took'st the way
To raise in me inexpiable hate,
Knowing, as needs I must, by thee betrayed?
In vain thou strivest to cover shame with shame,
Or by evasions thy crime uncoverest more.

Dal. Since thou determin'st weakness for no plea
In man or woman, though to thy own condemning,
Hear what assaults I had, what snares besides,
What sieges girt me round, ere I consented;
Which might have awed the best resolved of men,
The constantest, to have yielded without blame.
It was not gold, as to my charge thou lay'st,
That wrought with me: thou know'st the magistrates
And princes of my country came in person,
Solicited, commanded, threatened, urged,
Adjured by all the bonds of civil duty
And of religion, pressed how just it was,
How honourable, how glorious, to entrap
A common enemy, who had destroyed
Such numbers of our nation: and the priest
Was not behind, but ever at my ear,
Preaching how meritorious with the gods
It would be to ensnare an irreligious
Dishonourer of Dagon: what had I
To oppose against such powerful arguments?
Only my love of thee held long debate,
And combated in silence all these reasons
With hard contest: at length that grounded maxim,
So rife and celebrated in the mouths
Of wisest men, that to the public good
Private respects must yield, with grave authority
Took full possession of me, and prevailed;
Virtue, as I thought, truth, duty, so enjoining.

Sams. I thought where all thy circling wiles would end;
In feigned religion, smooth hypocrisy!
But had thy love, still odiously pretended,
Been, as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee
Far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds.
I, before all the daughters of my tribe
And of my nation, chose thee from among
My enemies, loved thee, as too well thou knew'st;
Too well; unbosomed all my secrets to thee,
Not out of levity, but overpowered
By thy request, who could deny thee nothing;
Yet now am judged an enemy. Why then
Didst thou at first receive me for thy husband,
Then, as since then, thy country's foe professed?
Being once a wife, for me thou wast to leave
Parents and country; nor was I their subject,
Nor under their protection, but my own,
Thou mine, not their's: if aught against my life
Thy country sought of thee, it sought unjustly,
Against the law of nature, law of nations;
No more thy country, but an impious crew
Of men conspiring to uphold their state
By worse than hostile deeds, violating the ends
For which our country is a name so dear;
Not therefore to be obeyed. But zeal moved thee;
To please thy gods thou did'st it; gods unable
To acquit themselves and prosecute their foes
But by ungodly deeds, the contradiction
Of their own deity, gods can not be;
Less therefore to be pleased, obeyed, or feared
These false pretexts and varnished colours failing,
Bare in thy guilt, how foul must thou appear!

Dal. In argument with men a woman ever
Goes by the worse, whatever be her cause.

Sams. For want of words no doubt, or lack of breath;
Witness when I was worried with thy peals.

Dal. I was a fool, too rash, and quite mistaken
In what I thought would have succeeded best.
Let me obtain forgiveness of thee, Samson;
Afford me place to show what recompense
Towards thee I intend for what I have misdone,
Misguided; only what remains past cure
Bear not too sensibly, nor still insist
To afflict thyself in vain: though sight be lost,
Life yet hath many solaces, enjoyed
Where other senses want not their delights
At home in leisure and domestic ease,
Exempt from many a care and chance, to which
Eyesight exposes daily men abroad.
I to the lords will intercede, not doubting
Their favourable ear, that I may fetch thee
From forth this loathsome prison-house, to abide
With me, where my redoubled love and care
With nursing diligence, to me glad office,
May ever tend about thee to old age,
With all things grateful cheered, and so supplied

That what by me thou hast lost thou least shalt miss.

Sams. No, no; of my condition take no care;
It fits not; thou and I long since are twain:
Nor think me so unwary or accursed,
To bring my feet again into the snare
Where once I have been caught: I know thy trains,
Though dearly to my cost, thy gins, and toils;
Thy fair enchanted cup, and warbling charms,
No more on me have power; their force is nulled;
So much of adder's wisdom I have learned,
To fence my ear against thy sorceries.
If in my flower of youth and strength, when all men
Loved, honoured, feared me, thou alone could'st hate me,
Thy husband, slight me, sell me, and forego me;
How would'st thou use me now, blind and thereby
Deceivable, in most things as a child
Helpless, thence easily contemned and scorned,
And last neglected! How wouldst thou insult,
When I must live uxorious to thy will
In perfect thraldom; how again betray me,
Bearing my words and doings to the lords
To gloss upon, and, censuring, frown or smile!
This jail I count the house of liberty
To thine, whose doors my feet shall never enter.

Dal. Let me approach at least and touch thy hand.

Sams. Not for thy life, lest fierce remembrance wake
My sudden rage to tear thee joint by joint.
At distance I forgive thee; go with that;
Bewail thy falsehood, and the pious works
It hath brought forth to make thee memorable
Among illustrious women, faithful wives!
Cherish thy hastened widowhood with the gold
Of matrimonial treason! so farewell.

Dal. I see thou art implacable, more deaf
To prayers than winds and seas; yet winds to seas
Are reconciled at length, and sea to shore;
Thy anger, unappeasable, still rages,
Eternal tempest, never to be calmed.
Why do I humble thus myself, and, suing
For peace, reap nothing but repulse and hate;
Bid go with evil omen, and the brand
Of infamy upon my name denounced?
To mix with thy concernments I desist
Henceforth, nor too much disapprove my own.
Fame, if not double-faced, is double-mouthed,
And with contrary blasts proclaims most deeds;
On both his wings, one black, the other white,
Bears greatest names in his wild airy flight.
My name perhaps among the circumcised
In Dan, in Judah, and the bordering tribes
To all posterity may stand defamed,
With malediction mentioned, and the blot
Of falsehood most unconjugal traduced.
But in my country where I most desire,
In Ecron, Gaza, Asdod, and in Gath,
I shall be named among the famousest
Of women, sung at solemn festivals,
Living and dead recorded, who, to save
Her country from a fierce destroyer, chose
Above the faith of wedlock bands; my tomb
With odours visited and annual flowers;
Not less renowned than in mount Ephraim
Jael, who with inhospitable guile
Smote Sisera sleeping, through the temples nailed.
Nor shall I count it heinous to enjoy
The public marks of honour and reward,
Conferred upon me for the piety
Which to my country I was judged to have shown.
At this whoever envies or repines,
I leave him to his lot, and like my own. [*Exit.*]

Chor. She's gone, a manifest serpent by her sting
Discovered in the end till now concealed.

Sams. So let her go; God sent her to debase me,
And aggravate my folly, who committed
To such a viper his most secret trust
Of secrecy, my safety, and my life.

Chor. Yet beauty, though injurious, hath strange power,
After offence returning, to regain
Love once possessed, nor can be easily
Repulsed, without much inward passion felt
And secret sting of amorous remorse.

Sams. Love-quarrels oft in pleasing concord end,
Not wedlock treachery endangering life.

Chor. It is not virtue, wisdom, valour, wit,
Strength, comeliness of shape, or amplest merit,
That woman's love can win or long inherit;
But what it is, hard is to say,
Harder to hit,
(Which way soever men refer it,)
Much like thy riddle, Samson, in one day
Or seven, though one should musing sit.
If any of these or all the Timnian bride
Had not so soon preferred
Thy paranymph, worthless to thee compared,
Successor in thy bed,
Nor both so loosely disallied
Their nuptials, nor this last so treacherously
Had shorn the fatal harvest of thy head.
Is it for that such outward ornament
Was lavished on their sex, that inward gifts
Were left for haste unfinished, judgment scant,
Capacity not raised to apprehend
Or value what is best
In choice, but oftest to affect the wrong,
Or was too much of self-love mixed,
Of constancy no root infixed,
That either they love nothing, or not long?
Whate'er it be, to wisest men and best,
Seeming at first all heavenly under virgin veil,
Soft, modest, meek, demure.
Once joined, the contrary she proves, a thorn
Intestine, far within defensive arms

A cleaving mischief, in his way to virtue
Adverse and turbulent, or by her charms
Draws him awry enslaved
With dotage, and his sense depraved
To folly, and shameful deeds which ruin ends.
What pilot so expert but needs must wreck,
Embarked with such a steer's-mate at the helm?
Favoured of Heaven, who finds
One virtuous, rarely found,
That in domestic good combines:
Happy that house! his way to peace is smooth:
But virtue, which breaks through all opposition,
And all temptation can remove,
Most shines, and most is acceptable above.
Therefore God's universal law
Gave to the man despotic power
Over his female in due awe,
Nor from that right to part an hour,
Smile she or lower:
So shall he least confusion draw
On his whole life, not swayed
By female usurpation, or dismayed.
But had we best retire? I see a storm.
Sams. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.
Chor. But this another kind of tempest brings.
Sams. Be less obstruse, my riddling days are past.
Chor. Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward; I know him by his stride,
The giant Harapha of Gath, his look
Haughty, as is his pile high-built and proud.
Comes he in peace? what wind hath blown him hither
I less conjecture than when first I saw
The sumptuous Dalila floating this way:
His habit carries peace, his brow defiance.
Sams. Or peace or not, alike to me he comes.
Chor. His fraught we soon shall know, he now arrives.

[Enter] *Harapha.*

Har. I come not, Samson, to condole thy chance,
As these perhaps, yet wish it had not been,
Though for no friendly intent. I am of Gath;
Men call me Harapha, of stock renowned
As Og, or Anak, and the Emims old
That Kiriathaim held; thou knowest me now,
If thou at all art known. Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might and feats performed,
Incredible to me, in this displeased,
That I was never present on the place
Of those encounters, where we might have tried
Each other's force in camp or listed field;
And now am come to see of whom such noise
Hath walked about, and each limb to survey,
If thy appearance answer loud report.
Sams. The way to know were not to see, but taste.
Har. Dost thou already single me? I thought
Gyves and the mill had tamed thee. O that fortune
Had brought me to the field, where thou art famed
To have wrought such wonders with an ass's jaw!
I should have forced thee soon with other arms,
Or left thy carcass where the ass lay thrown:
So had the glory of prowess been recovered
To Palestine, won by a Philistine,
From the unforeskinned race, of whom thou bearest
The highest name for valiant acts; that honour,
Certain to have won by mortal duel from thee,
I lose, prevented by thy eyes put out.
Sams. Boast not of what thou would'st have done, but do
What then thou would'st; thou seest it in thy hand.
Har. To combat with a blind man I disdain,
And thou hast need much washing to be touched.
Sams. Such usage as your honourable lords,
Afford me, assassinated and betrayed,
Who durst not with their whole united powers
In fight withstand me single and unarmed,
Nor in the house with chamber-ambushes
Close-banded durst attack me, no, not sleeping,
Till they had hired a woman with their gold
Breaking her marriage faith to circumvent me.
Therefore, without feigned shifts, let be assigned
Some narrow place enclosed, where sight may give thee,
Or rather flight, no great advantage on me;
Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy helmet
And brigandine of brass, thy broad habergeon,
Vantbrass and greaves, and gauntlet, add thy spear,
A weaver's beam, and seven-times folded shield;
I only with an oaken staff will meet thee,
And raise such outcries on thy clattered iron,
Which long shall not withhold me from thy head,
That in a little time, while breath remains thee,
Thou oft shalt wish thyself at Gath, to boast
Again in safety what thou wouldst have done
To Samson, but shalt never see Gath more.
Har. Thou durst not thus disparage glorious arms,
Which greatest heroes have in battle worn,
Their ornament and safety, had not spells,
And black enchantments, some magician's art,
Armed thee or charmed thee strong, which thou from Heaven
Feigned'st at thy birth was given thee in thy hair,
Where strength can least abide, though all thy hairs
Were bristles ranged like those that ridge the back
Of chafed wild boars, or ruffled porcupines.
Sams. I know no spells, use no forbidden arts,
My trust is in the living God, who gave me
At my nativity this strength, diffused
No less through all my sinews, joints and bones,

That thine, while I preserved these locks unshorn,
The pledge of my unviolated vow.
For proof hereof, if Dagon be thy god,
Go to his temple, invocate his aid
With solemnest devotion, spread before him
How highly it concerns his glory now
To frustrate and dissolve these magic spells,
Which I to be the power of Israel's God
Avow, and challenge Dagon to the test,
Offering to combat thee his champion bold,
With the utmost of his godhead seconded:
Then thou shalt see, or rather, to thy sorrow,
Soon feel, whose god is strongest, thine or mine.

Har. Presume not on thy God, whate'er he be:
Thee he regards not, owns not, hath cut off
Quite from this people, and delivered up
Into thy enemies' hand, permitted them
To put out both thine eyes, and fettered send thee
Into the common prison, there to grind
Among the slaves and asses thy comrades,
As good for nothing else; no better service
With those thy boisterous locks, no worthy match
For valour to assail, nor by the sword
Of noble warrior, so to stain his honour,
But by the barber's razor best subdued.

Sams. All these indignities, for such they are
From thine, these evils I deserve, and more,
Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me
Justly, yet despair not of his final pardon,
Whose ear is ever open, and his eye
Gracious to readmit the suppliant:
In confidence whereof I once again
Defy thee to the trial of mortal fight,
By combat to decide whose god is God,
Thine, or whom I with Israel's sons adore.

Har. Fair honour that thou dost thy God, in trusting
He will accept thee to defend his cause,
A murderer, a revolter, and a robber!

Sams. Tongue-doughty giant, how dost thou prove me these?

Har. Is not thy nation subject to our lords?
Their magistrates confessed it when they took thee
As a league breaker, and delivered bound
Into our hands: for hadst thou not committed
Notorious murder on those thirty men
At Ascalon, who never did thee harm,
Then like a robber stripped'st them of their robes?
The Philistines, when thou hadst broke the league,
Went up with armed powers thee only seeking,
To others did no violence or spoil.

Sams. Among the daughters of the Philistines
I chose a wife, which argued me no foe;
And in your city held my nuptial feast:
But your ill meaning politician lords,
Under pretence of bridal friends and guests,
Appointed to await me thirty spies,
Who, threatening cruel death, constrained the bride
To wring from me, and tell to them, my secret,
That solved the riddle which I had proposed.
When I perceived all set on enmity,
As on my enemies, wherever chanced,
I used hostility, and took their spoil,
To pay my underminers in their coin.
My nation was subjected to your lords;
It was the force of conquest: force with force
Is well ejected when the conquered can.
But I, a private person, whom my country
As a league bearer gave up bound, presumed
Single rebellion, and did hostile acts.
I was no private, but a person raised
With strength sufficient, and command from Heaven
To free my country: if their servile minds
Me, their deliverer sent, would not receive,
But to their masters gave me up for nought,
The unworthier they; whence to this day they serve.
I was to do my part from Heaven assigned,
And hath performed it, if my known offence
Hath not disabled me, not all your force;
These shifts refuted, answer thy appellant,
Though by his blindness maimed for high attempts,
Who now defies thee thrice to single fight,
As a petty enterprise of small enforce.

Har. With thee! a man condemned, a slave enrolled.
Due by the law to capital punishment!
To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.

Sams. Cam'st thou for this, vain boaster, to survey me,
To descant on my strength, and give thy verdict?
Come nearer; part not hence so slight informed;
But take good heed my hand survey not thee.

Har. O Baal-zebub! can my ears unused
Hear these dishonours, and not render death?

Sams. No man withholds thee, nothing from thy hand
Fear I incurable; bring up thy van,
My heels are fettered but my fist is free.

Har. This insolence other kind of answer fits.

Sams. Go, baffled coward! lest I run upon thee,
Though in these chains, bulk without spirit vast,
And with one buffet lay thy structure low,
Or swing thee in the air, then dash thee down
To the hazard of thy brains and shattered sides.

Har. By Astaroth, ere long thou shalt lament
These braveries, in irons loaden on thee. [*Exit.*]

Chor. His giantship is gone somewhat crestfallen,
Stalking with less unconscionable strides,
And lower looks, but in a sultry chafe.

Sams. I dread him not, nor all his giant brood,
Though fame divulge him father of five sons,
All of gigantic size, Goliah chief.

Chor. He will directly to the lords, I fear,

And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other yet further to afflict thee.
Sams. He must allege some cause, and offered fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise
Whether he durst accept the offer or not;
And, that he durst not, plain enough appeared.
Much more affliction than already felt
They can not well impose, nor I sustain;
If they intend advantage of my labours,
The work of many hands which earns my keeping
With no small profit daily to my owners.
But come what will, my deadliest foe will prove
My speediest friend, by death to rid me hence;
The worst that he can give, to me the best.
Yet so it may fall out, because their end
Is hate, not help to me, it may with mine
Draw their own ruin who attempt the deed.
Chor. O how comely it is, and how reviving
To the spirits of just men long oppressed!
When God into the hands of their deliverer
Puts invincible might
To quell the mighty of the earth, the oppressor,
The brute and boisterous force of violent men,
Hardy and industrious to support
Tyrannic power, but raging to pursue
The righteous and all such as honour truth;
He all their ammunition
And feats of war defeats,
With plain heroic magnitude of mind
And celestial vigour armed:
Their armouries and magazines contemns,
Renders them useless; while
With winged expedition,
Swift as the lightning glance, he executes
His errand on the wicked, who, surprised,
Lose their defence, distracted and amazed.
But patience is more oft the exercise
Of saints, the trial of their fortitude,
Making them each his own deliverer,
And victor over all
That tyranny or fortune can inflict.
Either of these is in thy lot,
Samson, with might endued
Above the sons of men; but sight bereaved
May chance to number thee with those
Whom patience finally must crown.
This idol's day hath been to thee no day of rest,
Labouring thy mind
More than the working day thy hands.
And yet perhaps more trouble is behind,
For I descry this way
Some other tending; in his hand
A sceptre or quaint staff he bears,
Comes on amain, speed in his look.
By his habit I discern him now
A public officer, and now at hand.
His message will be short and voluble.

[Enter] *Officer.*

Off. Hebrews, the prisoner Samson here I seek.
Chor. His manacles remark him, there he sits.
Off. Samson, to thee our lords thus bade me say;
This day to Dagon is a solemn feast,
With sacrifices, triumph, pomp, and games:
Thy strength they know surpassing human rate,
And now some public proof thereof require
To honour this great feast, and great assembly;
Rise therefore with all speed, and come along,
Where I will see thee heartened, and fresh clad,
To appear, as fits, before the illustrious lords.
Sams. Thou knowest I am an Hebrew, therefore tell them,
Our law forbids at their religious rites
My presence, for that cause I can not come.
Off. This answer, be assured, will not content them.
Sams. Have they not sword-players, and every sort
Of gymnic artists, wrestlers, riders, runners,
Jugglers, and dancers, antics, mummers, mimics,
But they must pick me out with shackles tired,
And over-laboured at their public mill,
To make them sport with blind activity?
Do they not seek occasion of new quarrels
On my refusal to distress me more,
Or make a game of my calamities?
Return the way thou cam'st, I will not come.
Off. Regard thyself; this will offend them highly.
Sams. Myself! my conscience and internal peace.
Can they think me so broken, so debased
With corporal servitude, that my mind ever
Will condescend to such absurd commands?
Although their drudge, to be their fool or jester,
And in my midst of sorrow and heart-grief
To show them feats, and play before their god,
The worst of all indignities, yet on me
Joined with extreme contempt? I will not come.
Off. My message was imposed on me with speed,
Brooks no delay: is this thy resolution?
Sams. So take it with what speed thy message needs.
Off. I am sorry what this stoutness will produce.
[*Exit.*
Sams. Perhaps thou shalt have cause to sorrow indeed.
Chor. Consider, Samson; matters now are strained
Up to the height, whether to hold or break:
He's gone, and who knows how he may report
Thy words by adding fuel to the flame?
Expect another message more imperious,
More lordly thundering than thou well wilt bear.
Sams. Shall I abuse this consecrated gift

Of strength, again returning with my hair,
After my great transgression; so requite
Favour renewed, and add a greater sin
By prostituting holy things to idols?
A Nazarite in place abominable,
Vaunting my strength in honour to their Dagon!
Besides, how vile, contemptible, ridiculous,
What act more execrably unclean, profane!

Chor. Yet with this strength thou serv'st the Philistines,
Idolatrous, uncircumcised, unclean.

Sams. Not in their idol-worship, but by labour
Honest and lawful, to deserve my food
Of those who have me in their civil power.

Chor. Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.

Sams. Where outward force constrains, the sentence holds,
But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon,
Not dragging? The Philistine lords command.
Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,
I do it freely, venturing to displease
God for the fear of man, and man prefer,
Set God behind; which in his jealousy
Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveness.
Yet that he may dispense with me, or thee,
Present in temples at idolatrous rites
For some important cause thou need'st not doubt.

Chor. How thou wilt here come off surmounts my reach.

Sams. Be of good courage; I begin to feel
Some rousing motions in me, which dispose
To something extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this messenger will go along,
Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour
Our law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.
If there be aught of presage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By some great act, or of my days the last.

Chor. In time thou hast resolved, the man returns.

[Enter] *Officer.*

Off. Samson, this second message from our lords
To thee I am bid say. Art thou our slave,
Our captive, at the public mill our drudge,
And darest thou at our sending and command
Dispute thy coming? come without delay;
Or we shall find such engines to assail
And hamper thee, as thou shalt come of force,
Though thou wert firmlier fastened than a rock.

Sams. I could be well content to try their art,
Which to no few of them would prove pernicious,
Yet, knowing their advantages too many,
Because they shall not trail me through their streets
Like a wild beast, I am content to go.
Masters' commands come with a power resistless
To such as owe them absolute subjection;
And for a life who will not change his purpose?
(So mutable are all the ways of men;)
Yet this be sure, in nothing to comply
Scandalous or forbidden in our law.

Off. I praise thy resolutions: doff these links:
By this compliance thou wilt win the lords
To favour, and perhaps to set thee free.

Sams. Brethren, farewell; your company along
I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them
To see me girt with friends: and how the sight
Of me, as of a common enemy,
So dreaded once, may now exasperate them,
I know not: lords are lordliest in their wines;
And the well-feasted priest then soonest fired
With zeal, if aught religion seem concerned;
No less the people, on their holy-days,
Impetuous, insolent, unquenchable:
Happen what may, of me expect to hear
Nothing dishonourable, impure, unworthy
Our God, our law, my nation, or myself,
The last of me or no I can not warrant. [*Exit.*]

Chor. Go, and the Holy One
Of Israel be thy guide
To what may serve his glory best, and spread his name
Great among the heathen round:
Send thee the angel of thy birth, to stand
Fast by thy side, who from thy father's field
Rode up in flames after his message told
Of thy conception, and be now a shield
Of fire; that Spirit, that first rushed on thee
In the camp of Dan,
Be efficacious in thee now at need!
For never was from Heaven imparted
Measure of strength so great to mortal seed,
As in thy wondrous actions hath been seen.—
But wherefore comes old Manoah in such haste
With youthful steps? much livelier than erewhile
He seems; supposing here to find his son,
Or of him bringing to us some glad news?

[Enter] *Manoah.*

Man. Peace with you, brethren; my inducement hither
Was not at present here to find my son,
By order of the lords now parted hence
To come and play before them at their feast.
I heard all as I came, the city rings,
And numbers thither flock: I had no will,
Lest I should see him forced to things unseemly.
But that which moved my coming now, was chiefly
To give ye part with me what hope I have
With good success to work his liberty.

Chor. That hope would much rejoice us to partake
With thee; say, reverend sire, we thirst to hear.

Man. I have attempted one by one the lords,
Either at home, or through the high street passing,
With supplication prone and father's tears,

To accept of ransom for my son, their prisoner.
Some much averse I found and wondrous harsh,
Contemptuous, proud, set on revenge and spite,
That part most reverenced Dagon and his priests;
Others more moderate seeming, but their aim
Private reward, for which both God and state
They easily would set to sale: a third
More generous far and civil, who confessed
They had enough revenged; having reduced
Their foe to misery beneath their fears,
The rest was magnanimity to remit,
If some convenient ransom were proposed.—
What noise or shout was that? it tore the sky.

Chor. Doubtless the people shouting to behold
Their once great dread, captive, and blind before them,
Or at some proof of strength before them shown.

Man. His ransom, if my whole inheritance
May compass it, shall willingly be paid
And numbered down: much rather I shall choose
To live the poorest in my tribe, than richest,
And he in that calamitous prison left.
No, I am fixed not to part hence without him.
For his redemption all my patrimony,
If need be, I am ready to forego
And quit; not wanting him, I shall want nothing.

Chor. Fathers are wont to lay up for their sons,
Thou for thy son art bent to lay out all;
Sons wont to nurse their parents in old age,
Thou in old age carest how to nurse thy son,
Made older than thy age through eyesight lost.

Man. It shall be my delight to tend his eyes.
And view him sitting in the house, ennobled
With all those high exploits by him achieved,
And on his shoulders waving down those locks
That of a nation armed the strength contained:
And I persuade me, God had not permitted
His strength again to grow up with his hair,
Garrisoned round about him like a camp
Of faithful soldiery, were not his purpose
To use him further yet in some great service;
Not to sit idle with so great a gift
Useless, and thence ridiculous about him.
And since his strength with eyesight was not lost,
God will restore him eyesight to his strength.

Chor. Thy hopes are not ill founded, nor seem vain
Of his delivery, and thy joy thereon
Conceived agreeable to a father's love,
In both which we, as next, participate.

Man. I know your friendly minds and—O what noise!—
Mercy of heaven, what hideous noise was that?
Horribly loud, unlike the former shout.

Chor. Noise call you that, or universal groan,
As if the whole inhabitation perished!
Blood, death, and deathful deeds are in that noise,
Ruin, destruction at the utmost point.

Man. Of ruin indeed methought I heard the noise;
Oh! it continues, they have slain my son.

Chor. Thy son is rather slaying them; that outcry
From slaughter of one foe could not ascend.

Man. Some dismal accident it needs must be;
What shall we do, stay here or run and see?

Chor. Best keep together here, lest, running thither,
We unawares run into danger's mouth.
This evil on the Philistines is fallen;
From whom could else a general cry be heard?
The sufferers then will scarce molest us here
From other hands we need not much to fear.
What if, his eyesight (for to Israel's God
Nothing is hard) by miracle restored,
He now be dealing dole among his foes,
And over heaps of slaughtered walk his way?

Man. That were a joy presumptuous to be thought.

Chor. Yet God hath wrought things as incredible
For his people of old; what hinders now?

Man. He can, I know, but doubt to think he will;
Yet hope would fain subscribe, and tempts belief.
A little stay will bring some notice hither.

Chor. Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;
For evil news rides post, while good news baits.
And to our wish I see one hither speeding,
An Hebrew, as I guess, and of our tribe.

[Enter] *Messenger.*

Mess. O whither shall I run, or which way fly
The sight of this so horrid spectacle,
Which erst my eyes beheld and yet behold?
For dire imagination still pursues me.
But providence or instinct of nature seems,
Or reason though disturbed, and scarce consulted,
To have guided me aright I know not how,
To thee first, reverend Manoah, and to these
My countrymen, whom here I knew remaining,
As at some distance from the place of horror,
So in the sad event too much concerned.

Man. The accident was loud, and here before thee
With rueful cry, yet what it was we hear not;
No preface needs, thou seest we long to know.

Mess. It would burst forth, but I recover breath
And sense distract, to know well what I utter.

Man. Tell us the sum, the circumstance defer.

Mess. Gaza yet stands, but all her sons are fallen,
All in a moment overwhelmed and fallen.

Man. Sad, but thou know'st to Israelites not saddest
The desolation of a hostile city.

Mess. Feed on that first; there may in grief be surfeit.

Man. Relate by whom.
Mess. By Samson.
Man. That still lessens
The sorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.
Mess. Ah, Manoah, I refrain too suddenly
To utter what will come at last too soon;
Lest evil tidings, with too rude irruption
Hitting thy aged ear, should pierce too deep.
Man. Suspense in news is torture; speak them out.
Mess. Take then the worst in brief, Samson is dead.
Man. The worst indeed! O all my hopes defeated
To free him hence! but death, who sets all free,
Hath paid his ransom now and full discharge.
What windy joy this day had I conceived
Hopeful of his delivery, which now proves
Abortive as the first-born bloom of spring
Nipt with the lagging rear of winter's frost!
Yet ere I give the reins to grief, say first,
How died he; death to life is crown or shame.
All by him fell, thou sayest; by whom fell he?
What glorious hand gave Samson his death's wound?
Mess. Unwounded of his enemies he fell.
Man. Wearied with slaughter then, or how? explain.
Mess. By his own hands.
Man. Self-violence? what cause
Brought him so soon at variance with himself
Among his foes?
Mess. Inevitable cause
At once both to destroy and be destroyed;
The edifice, where all were met to see him,
Upon their heads and on his own he pulled.
Man. O lastly overstrong against thyself!
A dreadful way thou took'st to thy revenge.
More than enough we know; but while things yet
Are in confusion, give us, if thou canst,
Eyewitness of what first or last was done,
Relation more particular and distinct.
Mess. Occasions drew me early to this city;
And, as the gates I entered with sunrise,
The morning trumpets festival proclaimed
Through each high street: little I had despatched,
When all abroad was rumoured that this day
Samson should be brought forth, to show the people
Proof of his mighty strength in feats and games;
I sorrowed at his captive state, but minded
Not to be absent at that spectacle.
The building was a spacious theatre
Half-round, on two main pillars vaulted high,
With seats where all the lords, and each degree
Of sort, might sit in order to behold;
The other side was open, where the throng
On banks and scaffolds under sky might stand;
I among these aloof obscurely stood.
The feast and noon grew high, and sacrifice
Had filled their hearts with mirth, high cheer, and wine,
When to their sports they turned. Immediately
Was Samson as a public servant brought,
In their state livery clad; before him pipes
And timbrels, on each side went armed guards,
Both horse and foot, before him and behind
Archers, and slingers, cataphracts, and spears.
At sight of him the people with a shout
Rifted the air, clamouring their god with praise
Who had made their dreadful enemy their thrall.
He patient, but undaunted, where they led him,
Came to the place; and what was set before him,
Which without help of eye might be assayed,
To heave, pull, draw, or break, he still performed
All with incredible, stupendous force,
None daring to appear antagonist.
At length for intermission sake they led him
Between the pillars; he his guide requested
(For so from such as nearer stood we heard)
As overtired to let him lean a while
With both his arms on those two massy pillars,
That to the arched roof gave main support.
He, unsuspicious, led him; which, when Samson
Felt in his arms, with head a while inclined,
And eyes fast fixed he stood, as one who prayed,
Or some great matter in his mind revolved:
At last, with head erect, thus cried aloud;
"Hitherto, lords, what your commands imposed
I have performed, as reason was, obeying,
Not without wonder or delight beheld:
Now of my own accord such other trial
I mean to show you of my strength, yet greater,
As with amaze shall strike all who behold.'
This uttered, straining all his nerves he bowed
As with the force of winds and waters pent,
When mountains tremble, those two massy pillars
With horrible convulsion to and fro
He tugged, he shook, till down they came, and drew
The whole roof after them with burst of thunder
Upon the heads of all who sat beneath,
Lords, ladies, captains, counsellors, or priests,
Their choice nobility and flower, not only
Of this but each Philistian city round,
Met from all parts to solemnize this feast.
Samson, with these immixed, inevitably
Pulled down the same destruction on himself;
The vulgar only scaped who stood without.
Chor. O dearly-bought revenge, yet glorious!
Living or dying thou hast fulfilled
The work for which thou wast foretold
To Israel, and now liest victorious
Among thy slain, self-killed,
Not willingly, but tangled in the fold
Of dire necessity, whose law in death conjoined
Thee with thy slaughtered foes, in number more
Than all thy life hath slain before.
1 *Semichor.* While their hearts were jocund and sublime

Drunk with idolatry, drunk with wine,
And fat regorged of bulls and goats,
Chanting their idol, and preferring
Before our living Dread who dwells
In Silo, his bright sanctuary:
Among them he a spirit of phrenzy sent,
Who hurt their minds,
And urged them on with mad desire
To call in haste for their destroyer;
They, only set on sport and play,
Unweetingly importuned
Their own destruction to come speedy upon them.
So fond are mortal men,
Fallen into wrath divine,
As their own ruin on themselves to invite,
Insensate left, or to sense reprobate,
And with blindness internal struck.
2 *Semichor.* But he, though blind of sight,
Despised and thought extinguished quite
With inward eyes illuminated,
His fiery virtue roused
From under ashes into sudden flame,
And as an evening dragon came,
Assailant on the perched roosts
And nests in order ranged
Of tame villatic fowl; but as an eagle
His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads.
So virtue, given for lost,
Depressed, and overthrown, as seemed,
Like that self-begotten bird
In the Arabian woods embossed,
That no second knows nor third,
And lay ere while a holocaust,
From out her ashy womb now teemed,
Revives, reflourishes, then vigorous most
When most unactive deemed;
And, though her body die, her fame survives
A secular bird ages of lives.
Man. Come, come; no time for lamentation now,
Nor much more cause; Samson hath quit himself
Like Samson, and heroicly hath finished
A life heroic: on his enemies
Fully revenged, hath left them years of mourning,
And lamentation to the sons of Caphtor
Through all Philistian bounds; to Israel
Honour hath left, and freedom, let but them
Find courage to lay hold on this occasion;
To himself and father's house eternal fame;
And, which is best and happiest yet, all this
With God not parted from him, as was feared,
But favouring and assisting to the end.
Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
Or knock the breast; no weakness, no contempt,
Dispraise, or blame; nothing but well and fair,
And what may quiet us in a death so noble.
Let us go find the body, where it lies
Soaked in his enemies' blood; and from the stream
With lavers pure, and cleansing herbs, wash off
The clotted gore. I, with what speed the while,
(Gaza is not in plight to say us nay,)
Will send for all my kindred, all my friends,
To fetch him hence, and solemnly attend
With silent obsequy and funeral train,
Home to his father's house; there will I build him
A monument, and plant it round with shade
Of laurel evergreen, and branching palm,
With all his trophies hung, and acts enrolled
In copious legend, or sweet lyric song.
Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
And from his memory inflame their breasts
To matchless valour, and adventures high:
The virgins also shall, on feastful days,
Visit his tomb with flowers; only bewailing
His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,
From whence captivity and loss of eyes.
Chor. All is best, though we oft doubt,
What the unsearchable dispose
Of highest Wisdom brings about,
And ever best found in the close.
Oft he seems to hide his face,
But unexpectedly returns,
And to his faithful champion hath in place
Bore witness gloriously; whence Gaza mourns
And all that band them to resist
His uncontrollable intent:
His servants he, with new acquist
Of true experience, from this great event
With peace and consolation hath dismissed
And calm of mind all passion spent.

Comus

A MASK.

PRESENTED AT LUDLOW CASTLE, 1643, BEFORE

JOHN, EARL OF BRIDGEWATER,

THEN PRESIDENT OF WALES.

* TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN LORD VISCOUNT BRACKLEY,†

Son and Heir-Apparent to the Earl of Bridgewater, &c.

MY LORD,

THIS poem, which received its first occasion of birth from yourself and others of your noble family, and much honour from your own person in the performance, now returns again to make a final dedication of itself to you. Although not openly acknowledged by the author,‡ yet it is a legitimate offspring, so lovely and so much desired, that the often copying of it hath tired my pen to give my several friends satisfaction, and brought me to a necessity of producing it to the public view; and now to offer it up in all rightful devotion to those fair hopes, and rare endowments of your much promising youth, which give a full assurance, to all that know you, of a future excellence. Live, sweet Lord, to be the honour of your name, and receive this as your own, from the hands of him, who hath by many favours been long obliged to your most honoured parents, and as in this representation your attendant *Thyrsis*, so now in all real expression, your faithful and most humble servant,

H. LAWES.

THE PERSONS.

The Attendant Spirit, *afterwards in the habit of* Thyrsis.
Comus *with his Crew.*
The Lady.
First Brother.
Second Brother.
Sabrina, *the Nymph.*

THE CHIEF PERSONS, WHO PRESENTED, WERE

The Lord Brackley.
Mr. Thomas Egerton, *his brother.*
The Lady Alice Egerton.

COMUS.

The first scene discovers a wild Wood.

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT *descends* or *enters.*

BEFORE the starry threshold of Jove's court
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright aërial spirits live insphered
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot,
Which men call Earth; and, with low-thoughted care
Confined and pester'd in this pin-fold here,
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful of the crown that Virtue gives,
After this mortal change, to her true servants,
Amongst the enthroned gods on sainted seats.
Yet some there be, that by due steps aspire
To lay their just hands on that golden key,
That opes the palace of Eternity:
To such my errand is; and, but for such,
I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds
With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould.

But to my task. Neptune, besides the sway
Of every salt flood, and each ebbing stream,
Took in by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove
Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles,
That, like to rich and various gems, inlay
The unadorn'd bosom of the deep:
Which he, to grace his tributary gods,
By course commits to several government,
And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns,
And wield their little tridents: but this Isle,
The greatest and the best of all the main,
He quarters to his blue-hair'd deities;
And all this tract that fronts the falling sun
A noble Peer of mickle trust and power
Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide
An old and haughty nation, proud in arms:
Where his fair offspring, nursed in princely lore,
Are coming to attend their father's state,
And new-entrusted sceptre: but their way
Lies through the perplex'd paths of this drear wood,
The nodding horror of whose shady brows
Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger;
And here their tender age might suffer peril,
But that by quick command from sovereign Jove
I was despatch'd for their defence and guard:
And listen why; for I will tell you now
What never yet was heard in tale or song,
From old or modern bard, in hall or bower.

Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
Crush'd the sweet poison of misused wine,
After the Tuscan mariners transform'd.

* This is the dedication to Lawes's edition of the Mask, 1637.
† The first Brother in the Mask. *Warton.*
‡ 'T never appeared under Milton's name, till the year 1645.

Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,
On Circe's island fell: (who knows not Circe,
The daughter of the Sun, whose charmed cup
Whoever tasted, lost his upright shape,
And downward fell into a groveling swine?)
This nymph, that gazed upon his clustering locks
With ivy berries wreath'd, and his blithe youth,
Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
Much like his father, but his mother more,
Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus nam'd:
Who, ripe and frolic of his full grown age,
Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields,
At last betakes him to this ominous wood;
And, in thick shelter of black shades imbower'd,
Excels his mother at her mighty art,
Offering to every weary traveller
His orient liquor in a crystal glass,
To quench the drouth of Phœbus; which as they taste,
(For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst)
Soon as the potion works, their human countenance,
The express resemblance of the gods, is chang'd
Into some brutish form of wolf, or bear,
Or ounce, or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,
All other parts remaining as they were;
And they, so perfect is their misery,
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
But boast themselves more comely than before:
And all their friends and native home forget,
To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.
Therefore when any, favour'd of high Jove,
Chances to pass through this adventurous glade,
Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star
I shoot from heaven, to give him safe convoy,
As now I do: but first I must put off
These my sky robes spun out of Iris' woof,
And take the weeds and likeness of a swain
That to the service of this house belongs,
Who with his soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song,
Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
And hush the waving woods; nor of less faith,
And in this office of his mountain watch
Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid
Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
Of hateful steps; I must be viewless now.

Comus enters with a charming-rod in one hand, his glass in the other; with him a rout of monsters, headed like sundry sorts of wild beasts, but otherwise like men and women, their apparel glistering; they come in making a riotous and unruly noise, with torches in their hands.

COMUS.

The star that bids the shepherd fold,
Now the top of heaven doth hold;
And the gilded car of day
His glowing axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantic stream;
And the slope sun his upward beam
Shoots against his dusky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal
Of his chamber in the East.
Meanwhile welcome Joy, and Feast,
Midnight Shout and Revelry,
Tipsy Dance, and Jollity.
Braid your locks with rosy twine,
Dropping odours, dropping wine.
Rigour now is gone to bed,
And Advice with scrupulous head.
Strict Age and sour Severity,
With their grave saws, in slumber lie.
We, that are of purer fire,
Imitate the starry quire,
Who, in their nightly watchful spheres,
Lead in swift round the months and years.
The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move:
And, on the tawny sands and shelves,
Trip the pert faeries and the dapper elves.
By dimpled brook and fountain brim,
The wood nymphs, deck'd with daisies trim,
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep.
What hath night to do with sleep?
Night hath better sweets to prove;
Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.
Come, let us our rites begin;
'Tis only daylight that makes sin,
Which these dun shades will ne'er report.
Hail, goddess of noctural sport,
Dark-veil'd Cotytto! to whom the secret flame
Of midnight torches burns; mysterious dame,
That ne'er art call'd, but when the dragon womb
Of Stygian darkness spits her thickest gloom,
And makes one blot of all the air;
Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
Wherein thou rid'st with Hecat', and befriend
Us thy vowed priests, till utmost end
Of all thy dues be done, and none left out;
Ere the babbling eastern scout,
The nice morn, on the Indian steep
From her cabined loop-hole peep,
And to the tell-tale sun descry
Our concealed solemnity.—
Come, knit hands, and beat the ground,
In a light fantastic round.

THE MEASURE

Break off, break off: I feel the different pace
Of some chaste footing near about this ground.
Run to your shrouds, within these brakes and trees,
Our number may affright: some virgin, sure
(For so I can distinguish by my art)
Benighted in these woods. Now to my charms,
And to my wily trains; I shall, ere long
Be well stock'd with as fair a herd as graz'd

About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl
My dazzling spells into the spongy air,
Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
And give it false presentments, lest the place
And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
And put the damsel to suspicious flight;
Which must not be, for that's against my course:
I, under fair pretence of friendly ends,
And well placed words of glozing courtesy,
Baited with reasons not unplausible,
Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
And hug him into snares. When once her eye
Hath met the virtue of this magic dust,
I shall appear some harmless villager,
Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
But here she comes. I fairly step aside,
And hearken, if I may, her business here.

The LADY *enters.*

Lady. This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,
My best guide now. Methought it was the sound
Of riot and ill managed merriment,
Such was the jocund flute, or gamesome pipe,
Stirs up among the loose, unlettered hinds;
When from their teeming flocks, and granges full,
In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,
And thank the gods amiss. I should be loth
To meet the rudeness and swilled insolence
Of such late wassailers; yet O! where else,
Shall I inform my unacquainted feet,
In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?
My brothers, when they saw me wearied out
With this long way, resolving here to lodge,
Under the spreading favour of these pines,
Stept, as they said, to the next thicket side,
To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit
As the kind hospitable woods provide.
They left me then, when the gray-hooded Even,
Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain:
But where they are, and why they came not back,
Is now the labour of my thoughts; 'tis likeliest
They had engaged their wandering steps too far;
And envious Darkness, ere they could return,
Had stole them from me: else, O thievish Night,
Why should'st thou, but for some felonious end,
In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars,
That Nature hung in heaven, and filled their lamps
With everlasting oil, to give due light
To the misled and lonely traveller?
This is the place, as well as I may guess,
Whence even now the tumult of loud mirth
Was rife, and perfect in my listening ear;
Yet nought but single darkness do I find.
What might this be? A thousand fantasies
Begin to throng into my memory,
Of calling shapes, and beckoning shadows dire,
And airy tongues, that syllable men's names
On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses.
These thoughts may startle well, but not astound,
The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
By a strong siding champion, Conscience.
O welcome, pure ey'd Faith, white handed Hope,
Thou hovering angel, girt with golden wings
And thou, unblemish'd form of Chastity!
I see ye visibly, and now believe
That He, the Supreme Good, to whom all things ill
Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
Would send a glistening guardian, if need were,
To keep my life and honour unassail'd.
Was I deceiv'd, or did a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
I did not err: there does a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
And casts a gleam over this tufted grove.
I can not halloo to my brothers, but
Such noise as I can make, to be heard farthest,
I'll venture; for my new-enlivened spirits
Prompt me; and they, perhaps, are not far off.

SONG.

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st, unseen,
Within thy airy shell,
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroider'd vale,
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well;
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair,
That likest thy Narcissus are?
O, if thou have
Hid them in some flowery cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet queen of parley, daughter of the sphere!
So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all Heaven's harmonies.

Enter COMUS.

Comus. Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
Breathe such divine, enchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence.
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,
At every fall smoothing the raven down
Of darkness, till it smiled! I have oft heard
My mother Circe, with the Syrens three,
Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,
Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs;
Who, as they sung, would take the prisoned soul
And lap it in Elysium: Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention,
And fell Charybdis murmured soft applause:
Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense,

And in sweet madness robbed it of itself:
But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
I never heard till now. I'll speak to her,
And she shall be my queen. Hail, foreign wonder!
Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,
Unless the goddess that, in rural shrine,
Dwell'st here with Pan, or Sylvan, by bless'd song
Forbidding every bleak, unkindly fog
To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood.

Lad. Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise,
That is addressed to unattending ears:
Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
How to regain my sever'd company,
Compelled me to awake the courteous Echo,
To give me answer from her mossy couch.

Com. What chance, good lady, hath bereft you thus?

Lad. Dim darkness and this leafy labyrinth.

Com. Could that divide you from near ushering guides?

Lad. They left me weary on a grassy turf.

Com. By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?

Lad. To seek i' the valley some cool friendly spring.

Com. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady?

Lad. They were but twain, and purpos'd quick return.

Com. Perhaps forestalling night prevented them.

Lad. How easy my misfortune is to hit!

Com. Imports their loss, beside the present need?

Lad. No less than if I should my brothers lose.

Com. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?

Lad. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips.

Com. Two such I saw, what time the labour'd ox
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swinked hedger at his supper sat.
I saw them under a green mantling vine,
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots.
Their port was more than human, as they stood:
I took it for a fairy vision
Of some gay creatures of the element,
That in the colours of the rainbow live,
And play i' the plighted clouds. I was awe-struck,
And, as I pass'd, I worshipp'd: if those you seek,
It were a journey like the path to Heaven,
To help you find them.

Lad. Gentle villager,
What readiest way would bring me to that place?

Com. Due west it rises from this shrubby point.

Lad. To find out that, good shepherd, I suppose,
In such a scant allowance of star-light,
Would overtask the best land-pilot's art,
Without the sure guess of well-practised feet.

Com. I know each lane, and every alley green,
Dingle, or bushy dell of this wild wood,
And every bosky bourn from side to side,
My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood;
And if your stray attendance be yet lodged,
Or shroud within these limits, I shall know
Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark
From her thatched pallet rouse; if otherwise,
I can conduct you, Lady, to a low
But loyal cottage, where you may be safe
Till further quest.

Lad. Shepherd I take thy word,
And trust thy honest offered courtesy,
Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds
With smoky rafters, than in tapestry halls
In courts of princes, where it first was named,
And yet is most pretended: in a place
Less warranted than this, or less secure,
I can not be, that I should fear to change it,—
Eye me, blessed Providence, and square my trial
To my proportioned strength.—Shepherd, lead on.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter the Two Brothers.

El. Br. Unmuffle, ye faint stars; and thou, fair moon,
That wont'st to love the traveller's benison,
Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkness and of shades;
Or, if your influence be quite dammed up
With black usurping mists, some gentler taper,
Through a rush-candle from the wicker hole
Of some clay habitation, visit us
With thy long-levelled rule of streaming light,
And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
Or Tyrian Cynosure.

Sec. Br. Or, if our eyes
Be barred that happiness, might we but hear
The folded flocks penned in their wattled cotes,
Or sound of pastoral reed with oaten stops,
Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock
Count the night watches to his feathery dames,
'Twould be some solace yet, some little cheering,
In this close dungeon of innumerous boughs.
But, O that hapless virgin, or lost Sister!
Where may she wander now, whither betake her
From the chill dew, among rude burs and thistles?
Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm
Leans her unpillow'd head, fraught with sad fears.
What, if in wild amazement and affright?
Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp
Of savage hunger, or of savage heat?

El. Br. Peace, Brother; be not over exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils:
For grant they be so, while they rest unknown,
What need a man forestall his date of grief,
And run to meet what he would most avoid?
Or if they be but false alarms of fear,
How bitter is such self-delusion!

I do not think my Sister so to seek,
Or so unprincipled in Virtue's book,
And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,
As that the single want of light and noise
(Not being in danger, as I trust she is not)
Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
And put them into misbecoming plight.
Virtue could see to do what Virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk. And Wisdom's self
Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude;
Where, with her best nurse Contemplation,
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impaired.
He, that has light within his own clear breast,
May sit i' the centre, and enjoy bright day:
But he, that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun;
Himself is his own dungeon.

Sec. Br. 'Tis most true,
That musing Meditation most affects
The pensive secrecy of desert cell,
Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,
And sits as safe as in the senate-house;
For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,
His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
Or do his gray hairs any violence?
But Beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree
Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
Of dragon-watch with unenchanted eye,
To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit,
From the rash hand of bold Incontinence.
You may as well spread out the unsunn'd heaps
Of misers' treasure by an outlaw's den,
And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
Danger will wink on Opportunity,
And let a single helpless maiden pass
Uninjured in this wild surrounding waste.
Of night, or loneliness, it recks me not;
I fear the dread events that dog them both,
Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person
Of our unowned Sister.

El. Br. I do not, Brother,
Infer, as if I thought my Sister's state
Secure, without all doubt or controversy;
Yet, where an equal poise of hope and fear
Does arbitrate th' event, my nature is
That I incline to hope, rather than fear,
And gladly banish squint suspicion.
My sister is not so defenceless left
As you imagine; she has a hidden strength
Which you remember not.

Sec. Br. What hidden strength,
Unless the strength of Heaven, if you mean that?

El. Br. I mean that too, but yet a hidden strength,
Which, if Heaven gave it, may be termed her own:
'Tis Chastity, my Brother, Chastity;
She, that has that, is clad in complete steel;
And, like a quivered Nymph with arrows keen,
May trace huge forests, and unharboured heaths,
Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds;
Where, through the sacred rays of Chastity,
No savage fierce, bandit, or mountaineer,
Will dare to soil her virgin purity;
Yea there, where very Desolation dwells,
By grots, and caverns shagged with horrid shades,
She may pass on with unblenched majesty;
Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.
Some say, no evil thing that walks by night
In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost
That breaks his magic chains at curfew time,
No goblin, or swart fairy of the mine,
Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity.
Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call
Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
To testify the arms of Chastity?
Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,
Fair silver-shafted queen, for ever chaste,
Wherewith she tam'd the brinded lioness
And spotted mountain-pard, but set at nought
The frivolous bolt of Cupid: gods and men
Fear'd her stern frown, and she was queen o' the woods.
What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield,
That wise Minerva wore, unconquered virgin,
Wherewith she freezed her foes to congealed stone,
But rigid looks of chaste austerity,
And noble grace, that dashed brute violence
With sudden adoration and blank awe?
So dear to Heaven is saintly Chastity,
That, when a soul is found sincerely so,
A thousand liveried Angels lackey her,
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt;
And, in clear dream and solemn vision,
Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear;
Till oft converse with heavenly habitants
Begin to cast a beam on the outward shape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,
Till all be made immortal: but when Lust,
By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
The soul grows clotted by contagion,
Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose
The divine property of her first being.
Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp,
Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres
Lingering, and sitting by a new-made grave,
As loath to leave the body that it lov'd,
And link'd itself by carnal sensuality
To a degenerate and degraded state.

Sec. Br. How charming is divine Philosophy!
Not harsh, and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute;

And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.
El. Br. List, list; I hear
Some far-off halloo break the silent air.
Sec. B. Methought so too; what should it be?
El. B. For certain
Either some one like us night-founder'd here,
Or else some neighbour woodman, or, at worst,
Some roving robber calling to his fellows.
Sec. B. Heaven keep my Sister! Again, again, and near!
Best draw, and stand upon our guard.
El. B. I'll halloo:
If he be friendly, he comes well; if not,
Defence is a good cause, and Heaven be for us!

Enter the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, *habited like a shepherd.*

That halloo I should know; what are you? speak;
Come not too near, you fall on iron stakes else.
Spir. What voice is that? my young Lord; speak again.
Sec. B. O Brother, 'tis my father's shepherd, sure.
El. B. Thyrsis? Whose artful strains have oft delay'd
The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,
And sweeten'd every muskrose of the dale?
How cam'st thou here, good swain? hath any ram
Slipt from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,
Or straggling wether the pent flock forsook?
How could'st thou find this dark sequester'd nook?
Spir. O my lov'd master's heir, and his next joy,
I came not here on such a trivial toy
As a strayed ewe, or to pursue the stealth
Of pilfering wolf; not all the fleecy wealth,
That doth enrich these downs, is worth a thought
To this my errand, and the care it brought.
But, O my virgin Lady, where is she?
How chance she is not in your company?
El. B. To tell thee sadly, Shepherd, without blame,
Or our neglect, we lost her as we came.
Spir. Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.
El. B. What fears, good Thyrsis? Pr'ythee briefly shew.
Spir. I'll tell ye; 'tis not vain or fabulous,
(Though so esteem'd by shallow ignorance)
What the sage poets, taught th' heavenly Muse,
Storied of old in high immortal verse,
Of dire chimeras, and enchanted isles,
And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to Hell;
For such there be, but unbelief is blind.
Within the navel of this hideous wood,
Immur'd in cypress shades a sorcerer dwells,
Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,
Deep skill'd in all his mother's witcheries;
And here to every thirsty wanderer
By sly enticement gives his baneful cup,
With many murmurs mix'd, whose pleasing poison
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likeness of a beast
Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage
Character'd in the face: this have I learnt
Tending my flocks hard by i' the hilly crofts,
That brow this bottom-glade; whence night by night
He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl,
Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,
Doing abhorred rites to Hecaté
In their obscured haunts of inmost bowers.
Yet have they many baits, and guileful spells,
To inveigle and invite the unwary sense
Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
This evening late, by them the chewing flocks
Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb
Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold.
I sat me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwove
With flaunting honeysuckle, and began,
Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
To meditate my rural minstrelsy
Till Fancy had her fill; but, ere a close,
The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,
And filled the air with barbarous dissonance;
At which I ceased, and listened them a while,
Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
Gave respite to the drowsy frighted steeds,
That draw the litter of close-curtain'd Sleep:
At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound
Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
And stole upon the air, that even Silence
Was took ere she was ware, and wished she might
Deny her nature, and be never more,
Still to be so displaced. I was all ear,
And took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of Death! but O! ere long,
Too well I did perceive it was the voice
Of my most honoured Lady, your dear Sister.
Amazed I stood, harrowed with grief and fear,
And, O poor hapless nightingale, thought I,
How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!
Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,
Through paths and turnings often trod by day,
Till, guided by mine ear, I found the place,
Where that damned wizard, hid in sly disguise,
(For so by certain signs I knew) had met
Already, ere my best speed could prevent,
The aidless innocent Lady, his wished prey;
Who gently asked if he had seen such two,
Supposing him some neighbour villager.
Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guessed
Ye were the two she meant; with that I sprung
Into swift flight, till I had found you here;
But further know I not.
Sec. Br. O night, and shades!
How are ye joined with Hell in triple knot

Against the unarmed weakness of one virgin,
Alone, and hapless! Is this the confidence
You gave me, Brother?

El. Br. Yes, and keep it still;
Lean on it safely; not a period
Shall be unsaid for me: against the threats
Of malice, or of sorcery, or that power
Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm,—
Virtue may be assailed, but never hurt,
Surprised by unjust force, but not enthralled;
Yea, even that, which mischief meant most harm,
Shall in the happy trial prove most glory:
But evil on itself shall back recoil,
And mix no more with goodness; what at last
Gathered like scum, and settled to itself,
It shall be in eternal restless change
Self-fed, and self-consumed: if this fail,
The pillared firmament is rottenness,
And earth's base built on stubble.—But come, let's on.
Against the opposing will and arm of Heaven
May never this just sword be lifted up;
But for that damned magician, let him be girt
With all the grisly legions that troop
Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms
'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out,
And force him to return his purchase back,
Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
Curs'd as his life.

Spir. Alas! good venturous Youth,
I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise;
But here thy sword can do thee little stead;
Far other arms and other weapons must
Be those, that quell the might of hellish charms:
He, with his bare wand, can unthread thy joints,
And crumble all thy sinews.

El. Br. Why pr'ythee, Shepherd,
How durst thou then thyself approach so near,
As to make this relation?

Spir. Care, and utmost shifts,
How to secure the lady from surprisal,
Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,
Of small regard to see to, yet well skill'd
In every virtuous plant, and healing herb,
That spreads her verdant leaf to the morning ray:
He loved me well, and oft would beg me sing;
Which when I did, he on the tender grass
Would sit, and hearken even to ecstacy,
And in requital ope his leathern scrip,
And show me simples of a thousand names,
Telling their strange and vigorous faculties:
Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,
But of divine effect, he culled me out;
The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
But in another country, as he said,
Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this soil:
Unknown, and like esteemed, and the dull swain
Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon:
And yet more medicinal is it than that Moly,
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave;
He called it Hæmony, and gave it me,
And bade me keep it as of sovereign use
'Gainst all enchantments, mildew blast, or damp,
Or ghastly furies' apparition.
I pursed it up, but little reckoning made,
Till now that this extremity compelled:
But now I find it true; for by this means
I knew the foul enchanter though disguised,
Entered the very lime-twigs of his spells,
And yet came off: if you have this about you,
(As I will give you when we go) you may
Boldly assault the necromancer's hall;
Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood
And brandished blade rush on him; break his glass,
And shed the luscious liquor on the ground,
But seize his wand; though he and his cursed crew
Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,
Or like the sons of Vulcan vomit smoke,
Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.

El. Br. Thyrsis, lead on apace, I'll follow thee;
And some good Angel bear a shield before us.

The Scene changes to a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness: soft music, tables spread with all dainties. Comus appears with his rabble, and the Lady set in an enchanted chair, to whom he offers his glass, which she puts by, and goes about to rise.

COMUS.

Nay, Lady, sit; if I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all chained up in alabaster,
And you a statue, or as Daphne was,
Root-bound, that fled Apollo.

Lady. Fool, do not boast;
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
Thou hast immanacled, while Heaven sees good.

Com. Why are you vexed, Lady? Why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies far: see, here be all the pleasures,
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose-season.
And first, behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,
With spirits of balm and fragrant sirops mix'd:
Not that Nepenthes, which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.
Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
And to those dainty limbs, which Nature lent
For gentle usage and soft delicacy?
But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,
With that which you received on other terms:

Scorning the unexempt condition,
By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
That have been tired all day without repast,
And timely rest have wanted; but, fair Virgin,
This will restore all soon.

Lady. 'Twill not, false traitor!
'Twill not restore the truth and honesty,
That thou hast banished from thy tongue with lies.
Was this the cottage, and the safe abode,
Thou told'st me of? What grim aspects are these,
These ugly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me!
Hence with thy brewed enchantments, foul deceiver!
Hast thou betrayed my credulous innocence
With visored falsehood and base forgery?
And would'st thou seek again to trap me here
With lickerish baits, fit to ensnare a brute?
Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,
I would not taste thy treasonous offer; none
But such as are good men can give good things;
And that, which is not good, is not delicious
To a well-governed and wise appetite.

Com. O foolishness of men! that lend their ears
To those budge doctors of the Stoic fur,
And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,
Praising the lean and sallow abstinence.
Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand.
Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,
Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
But all to please and sate the curious taste?
And set to work millions of spinning worms,
That in their green shops weave the smooth-haired silk,
To deck her sons; and, that no corner might
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
She hutch'd the all-worshipped ore, and precious gems,
To store her children with: if all the world
Should in a pet of temperance feed on pulse,
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
The All-giver would be unthanked, would be unpraised,
Not half his wishes known, and yet despised;
And we should serve him as a grudging master,
As a penurious niggard of his wealth;
And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
Who would be quite surcharged with her own weight,
And strangled with her waste fertility;
The earth cumbered, and the winged air darked with plumes,
The herds would over-multitude their lords,
The sea o'erfraught would swell, and the unsought diamonds
Would so imblaze the forehead of the deep,
And so bestud with stars, that they below
Would grow inured to light, and come at last
To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.
List, Lady; be not coy, and be not cozened
With that same vaunted name, virginity.
Beauty is Nature's coin, must not be hoarded,
But must be current; and the good thereof
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
Unsavoury in the enjoyment of itself:
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
It withers on the stalk with languished head.
Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown
In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,
Where most may wonder at the workmanship;
It is for homely features to keep home,
They had their name thence; coarse complexions,
And cheeks of sorry grain, will serve to ply
The sampler and to tease the housewife's wool.
What need a vermeil-tinctured lip for that,
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?
There was another meaning in these gifts;
Think what, and be advised; you are but young yet.

Lady. I had not thought to have unlocked my lips
In this unhallowed air, but that this juggler
Would think to charm my judgment, as my eyes,
Obtruding false rules pranked in reason's garb.
I hate when Vice can bolt her arguments,
And Virtue has no tongue to check her pride.—
Impostor! do not charge most innocent Nature,
As if she would her children should be riotous
With her abundance; she, good cateress,
Means her provision only to the good,
That live according to her sober laws,
And holy dictate of spare Temperance:
If every just man, that now pines with want,
Had but a moderate and beseeming share
Of that which lewdly-pampered Luxury
Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
Nature's full blessings would be well dispensed
In unsuperfluous even proportion,
And she no whit encumbered with her store
And then the giver would be better thanked,
His praise due paid; for swinish Gluttony
Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,
But with besotted base ingratitude
Crams, and blasphemes his Feeder. Shall I go on?
Or have I said enough? To him that dares
Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
Against the sun-clad power of Chastity,
Fain would I something say, yet to what end?
Thou hast nor ear, nor soul, to apprehend
The sublime notion and high mystery,
That must be uttered to unfold the sage,
And serious doctrine of virginity;
And thou art worthy that thou should'st not know
More happiness than this thy present lot.
Enjoy your dear wit and gay rhetoric,
That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence;

Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinced;
Yet, should I try, the uncontrolled worth
Of this pure cause, would kindle my rapt spirits
To such a flame of sacred vehemence,
That dumb things would be moved to sympathize,
And the brute Earth would lend her nerves and shake,
Till all thy magic structures, reared so high,
Were shattered into heaps o'er thy false head.

Com. She fables not: I feel that I do fear
Her words set off by some superior power;
And though not mortal, yet a cold shuddering dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus,
To some of Saturn's crew. I must dissemble,
And try her yet more strongly.—Come, no more;
This is mere moral babble, and direct
Against the canon laws of our foundation;
I must not suffer this; yet 'tis but the lees
And settlings of a melancholy blood:
But this will cure all straight; one sip of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight,
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.—

The Brothers rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground; his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in. The Attendant Spirit comes in.

SPIRIT.

What, have you let the false enchanter 'scape?
O ye mistook, ye should have snatched his wand,
And bound him fast; without his rod reversed,
And backward mutters of dissevering power,
We can not free the Lady that sits here
In stony fetters fixed and motionless:
Yet stay, be not disturbed: now I bethink me,
Some other means I have which may be used,
Which once of Melibœus old I learnt,
The soothest shepherd that e'er piped on plains.
There is a gentle nymph not far from hence,
That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream,
Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure;
Whilom she was the daughter of Locrine,
That had the sceptre from his father Brute.
She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pursuit
Of her enraged stepdame Guendolen,
Commended her fair innocence to the flood,
That staid her flight with his cross-flowing course.
The water-nymphs, that in the bottom played,
Held up their pearled wrists and took her in,
Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall;
Who, piteous of her woes, reared her lank head,
And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
In nectared lavers, strewed with asphodel;
And through the porch and inlet of each sense
Dropped in ambrosial oils, till she revived,
And underwent a quick immortal change,
Made goddess of the river: still she retains
Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,
Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs
That the shrewd meddling elf delights to make,
Which she with precious vialed liquors heals;
For which the shepherds at their festivals
Carol her goodness loud in rustic lays,
And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream
Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils.
And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
The clasping charm, and thaw the numbing spell,
If she be right invoked in warbled song;
For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift
To aid a virgin, such as was herself,
In hard-besetting need; this will I try,
And add the power of some adjuring verse.

SONG.

Sabrina fair,
Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
Listen for dear honour's sake,
Goddess of the silver lake,
Listen, and save.
Listen, and appear to us,
In name of great Oceanus;
By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethys' grave majectic pace,
By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
And the Carpathian wizard's hook,
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old sooth-saying Glaucus' spell,
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her son that rules the strands,
By Thetis' tinsel-slippered feet,
And the songs of Siren's sweet,
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
And fair Ligea's golden comb,
Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks,
Sleeking her soft alluring locks;
By all the Nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance,
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head,
From thy coral-paven bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answered have.
Listen, and save.

Sabrina rises, attended by Water-Nymphs, and sings.

By the rushy-fringed bank,
Where grows the willow and the osier dank,
My sliding chariot stays,
Thick set with agate, and the azure sheen
Of turkis blue, and emerald green,
That in the channel strays;
Whilst from off the waters fleet
Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
That bends not as I tread;

Gentle Swain, at thy request,
I am here.

Sp. Goddess dear,
We implore thy powerful hand
To undo the charmed band
Of true virgin here distressed,
Through the force and through the wile,
Of unblessed enchanter vile.

Sabr. Shepherd, 'tis my office best
To help ensnared chastity:
Brightest Lady, look on me;
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
Drops, that from my fountain pure
I have kept, of precious cure;
Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
Thrice upon thy rubied lip:
Next this marble venomed seat,
Smeared with gums of glutinous heat,
I touch with chaste palms moist and cold:—
Now the spell hath lost his hold,
And I must haste, ere morning hour,
To wait in Amphitrite's bower.

Sabrina descends, and the Lady rises out of her seat.

Sp. Virgin, daughter of Locrine
Sprung of old Anchises' line,
May thy brimmed waves for this
Their full tribute never miss
From a thousand petty rills,
That tumble down the snowy hills:
Summer drouth, or singed air,
Never scorch thy tresses fair,
Nor wet October's torrent flood
Thy molten crystal fill with mud;
May thy billows roll ashore
The beryl and the golden ore;
May thy lofty head be crowned
With many a tower and terrace round,
And here and there thy banks upon
With groves of myrrh and cinnamon.
Come, Lady, while Heaven lends us grace,
Let us fly this cursed place,
Lest the sorcerer us entice
With some other new device.
Not a waste or needless sound,
Till we come to holier ground;
I shall be your faithful guide
Through this gloomy covert wide,
And not many furlongs thence
Is your Father's residence,
Where this night are met in state
Many a friend to gratulate
His wished presence; and beside
All the swains, that there abide,
With jigs and rural dance resort;
We shall catch them at their sport,
And our sudden coming there
Will double all their mirth and cheer:
Come, let us haste, the stars grow high,
But night sits monarch yet in the mid sky.

The scene changes, presenting Ludlow town and the President's castle; then come in Country Dancers, after them the Attendant Spirit, with the two Brothers, and the Lady.

SONG.

Sp. Back, Shepherds, back; enough you play,
Till next sun-shine holiday:
Here be, without duck or nod,
Other trippings to be trod
Of lighter toes, and such court guise
As Mercury did first devise,
With the mincing dryades,
On the lawns, and on the leas.

This second Song presents them to their Father and Mother.

Noble Lord, and Lady bright,
I have brought ye new delight;
Here behold so goodly grown
Three fair branches of your own;
Heaven hath timely tried their youth,
Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
And sent them here through hard assays
With a crown of deathless praise,
To triumph in victorious dance
O'er sensual Folly and Intemperance.

The Dances ended, the Spirit epiloguises.

Sp. To the ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the sky:
There I suck the liquid air
All amidst the gardens fair
Of Hesperus, and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree:
Along the crisped shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund Spring;
The Graces, and the rosy-bosom'd Hours
Thither all their bounties bring;
There eternal Summer dwells,
And West-Winds, with musky wing,
About the cedared alleys fling
Nard and Cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue
Than the purfled scarf can shew;
And drenches with Elysian dew
(List, mortals, if your ears be true)
Beds of hyacinth and roses,
Where young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound
In slumber soft, and on the ground
Sadly sits th' Assyrian queen:
But far above in spangled sheen
Celestial Cupid, her famed son, advanced,
Holds his dear Psyche sweet entranced,

After her wandering labours long,
Till free consent the gods among
Make her his eternal bride,
And from her fair unspotted side
Two blissful twins are to be born,
Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.
But now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run,
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend;
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.
Mortals, that would follow me,
Love Virtue; she alone is free:
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

Poems on Several Occasions.

COMPOSED AT SEVERAL TIMES.

.....Baccare frontem
Cingite, ne vati noceat mala lingua futuro.—*Virgil, Eclog.* 7.

ANNO ÆTATIS 17.

ON THE DEATH OF A FAIR INFANT DYING OF A COUGH.

O FAIREST flower, no sooner blown but blasted,
Soft silken primrose fading timelessly,
Summer's chief honour, if thou had'st outlasted
Bleak Winter's force that made thy blossom dry;
For he, being amorous on that lovely dye
That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss,
But killed, alas! and then bewailed his fatal bliss.

For since grim Aquilo, his charioteer,
By boisterous rape the Athenian damsel got,
He thought it touched his deity full near,
If likewise he some fair one wedded not,
Thereby to wipe away the infamous blot
Of long uncoupled bed, and childless eld,
Which 'mongst the wanton gods, a foul reproach was held.

So, mounting up in icy-pearled car,
Through middle empire of the freezing air
He wandered long, till thee he spied from far;
There ended was his quest, there ceased his care:
Down he descended from his snow-soft chair,
But, all unwares, with his cold kind embrace,
Unhoused thy virgin soul from her fair biding place.

Yet art thou not inglorious in thy fate;
For so Apollo, with unweeting hand,
Whilom did slay his dearly loved mate,
Young Hyacinth, born on Eurotas' strand:
Young Hyacinth, the pride of Spartan land;
But then transformed him to a purple flower:
Alack, that so to change thee Winter had no power!

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,
Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb,
Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,
Hid from the world in a low delved tomb;
Could Heaven for pity thee so strictly doom?
Oh no! for something in thy face did shine
Above mortality, that showed thou wast divine.

Resolve me then, O soul most surely blest,
(If so it be that thou these plaints dost hear;)
Tell me, bright Spirit, where'er thou hoverest,
Whether above that high first-moving sphere,
Or in the Elysian fields, (if such there were;)
O say me true, if thou wert mortal wight,
And why from us so quickly thou did'st take thy flight?

Wert thou some star which from the ruined roof
Of shaked Olympus by mischance did'st fall;
Which careful Jove in nature's true behoof
Took up, and in fit place did reinstall?
Or did of late earth's sons besiege the wall
Of sheeny Heaven, and thou some goddess fled
Amongst us here below to hide thy nectared head?

Or wert thou that just Maid, who once before
Forsook the hated earth, O tell me sooth,
And camest again to visit us once more?
Or wert thou that sweet smiling youth?
Or that crowned matron sage, white-robed Truth?
Or any other of that heavenly brood
Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some good?

Or wert thou of the golden-winged host,
Who, having clad thyself in human weed,
To earth from thy prefixed seat did'st post,
And after short abode fly back with speed,
As if to show what creatures Heaven doth breed;
Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire,
To scorn the sordid world, and unto Heaven aspire?

But oh! why did'st thou not stay here below
To bless us with thy heavenly-loved innocence,
To slake his wrath, whom sin hath made our foe,
To turn swift-rushing black perdition hence,
Or drive away the slaughtering pestilence,

To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart?
But thou can'st best perform that office where thou art.

Then thou, the mother of so sweet a child,
Her false-imagined loss cease to lament,
And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild;
Think what a present thou to God hast sent,
And render him with patience what he lent;
This if thou do, he will an offspring give,
That, till the world's last end, shall make thy name to live.

ANNO ÆTATIS 19.

At a Vacation Exercise in the college, part Latin, part English. The Latin speeches ended, the English thus began.

Hail, native Language, that by sinews weak
Did'st move my first endeavouring tongue to speak,
And madest imperfect words with childish trips
Half unpronounced, slide through my infant lips,
Driving dumb Silence from the portal door,
Where he had mutely sat two years before!
Here I salute thee, and thy pardon ask,
That now I use thee in my latter task:
Small loss it is that thence can come unto thee,
I know my tongue but little grace can do thee:
Thou needest not be ambitious to be first,
Believe me I have thither packed the worst:
And, if it happens as I did forecast,
The daintiest dishes shall be served up last,
I pray thee then deny me not thy aid,
For this same small neglect that I have made:
But haste thee straight to do me once a pleasure,
And from thy wardrobe bring the chiefest treasure.
Not those new fangled toys, and trimming slight
Which takes our late fantastics with delight;
But cull those richest robes, and gayest attire,
Which deepest spirits, and choicest wits desire.
I have some naked thoughts that rove about,
And loudly knock to have their passage out;
And, weary of their place do only stay
Till thou hast decked them in thy best array;
That so they may, without suspect or fears,
Fly swiftly to this fair assembly's ears;
Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,
Thy service in some graver subject use,
Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,
Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound:
Such where the deep transported mind may soar
Above the wheeling poles, and at Heaven's door
Look in, and see each blissful deity
How he before the thunderous throne doth lie,
Listening to what unshorn Apollo sings
To the touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings
Immortal nectar to her kingly sire:
Then passing through the spheres of watchful fire
And misty regions of wide air next under,
And hills of snow, and lofts of piled thunder,
May tell at length how green eyed Neptune raves,
In Heaven's defiance mustering all his waves;
Then sing of secret things that came to pass
When beldam Nature in her cradle was;
And last of kings, and queens, and heroes old
Such as the wise Demodocus once told
In solemn songs at king Alcinous' feast,
While sad Ulysses' soul, and all the rest,
Are held with his melodious harmony
In willing chains and sweet captivity.
But fie, my wandering muse, how thou dost stray!
Expectance calls thee now another way;
Thou knowest it must be now thy only bent
To keep in compass of thy predicament:
Then quick about thy proposed business come,
That to the next I may resign my room.

Then *Ens* is represented as father of the predicaments his two sons, whereof the eldest stood for substance with his canons, which *Ens*, thus speaking, explains.

Good luck befriend thee, son; for at thy birth,
The fairy ladies danced upon the hearth;
Thy drowsy nurse hath sworn she did them spy
Come tripping to the room where thou didst lie,
And sweetly singing round about thy bed,
Strew all their blessings on thy sleeping head.
She heard them give thee this, that thou shouldst still
From eyes of mortals walk invisible:
Yet there is something that doth force my fear;
For once it was my dismal hap to hear
A sybil old, bow-bent with crooked age,
That far events full wisely could presage,
And in time's long and dark prospective glass
Foresaw what future days should bring to pass;
"Your son," said she, (" nor can you it prevent,)
Shall subject be to many an accident.
O'er all his brethren he shall reign as king,
Yet every one shall make him underling;
And those that can not live from him asunder,
Ungratefully shall strive to keep him under;
In worth and excellence he shall outgo them,
Yet, being above them, he shall be below them;
From others he shall stand in need of nothing,
Yet on his brother shall depend for clothing.
To find a foe it shall not be his hap;
And peace shall lull him in her flowery lap;
Yet shall he live in strife, and at his door
Devouring war shall never cease to roar;
Yea, it shall be his natural property
To harbour those that are at enmity.
What power, what force, what mighty spell, if not
Your learned hands, can loose this Gordian knot?"

The next *Quantity* and *Quality* spake in prose, then *Relation* was called by his name.

Rivers, arise; whether thou be the son
Of utmost Tweed, or Oose, or gulfy Dun,
Or Trent, who, like some earthborn giant spreads
His thirty arms along the indented meads;

Or sullen Mole, that runneth underneath;
Or Severn swift, guilty of maiden's death;
Or rocky Avon, or of sedgy Lee,
Or coaly Time, or ancient hallowed Dee;
Or Humber loud, that keeps the Scythian's name;
Or Medway smooth, or royal towered Thame.

[The rest was prose.]

ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY.

COMPOSED 1629.

This is the month, and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of Heaven's eternal King,
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing,
That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,
Wherewith he wont at heaven's high council-table
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and, here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain,
To welcome him to this his new abode,
Now while the Heaven, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

See, how from far, upon the eastern road
The star-led wizards, haste with odours sweet;
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode,
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet:
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the angel choir
From out his secret altar, touched with hallowed fire.

THE HYMN.

It was the winter wild,
While the Heaven-born child,
All meanly wrapt, in the rude manger lies;
Nature, in awe to him,
Had doffed her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

Only with speeches fair
She woos the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow,
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw;
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

But he, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek eyed Peace;
She, crowned with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere,
His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing;
And, waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes an universal peace through sea and land.

Nor war, or battle's sound
Was heard the world around:
The idle spear and shield were high up hung;
The hooked chariot stood,
Unstained with hostile blood;
The trumpet spake not to the armed throng;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovereign Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of light
His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kist,
Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.

The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fixed in steadfast gaze
Bending one way their precious influence:
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,
Or Lucifer that often warned them thence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow,
Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

And, though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame,
As his inferior flame
The new enlightened world no more should need;
He saw a greater sun appear
Than his bright throne, or burning axletree, could bear.

The shepherds on the lawn,
Or e'er the point of dawn,
Sat simply chatting in a rustic row;
Full little thought they then,
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them below;
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

When such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet,
As never was by mortal finger strook;
Divinely warbled voice
Answering the stringed noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took;
The air, such pleasures loath to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.

Nature that heard such sound,
Beneath the hollow round
Of Cynthia's seat, the airy region thrilling,
Now was almost won
To think her part was done,
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all Heaven and earth in happier union.

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light,
That with long beams the shamefaced night arrayed;
The helmed cherubim,
And sworded seraphim,
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings displayed;
Harping in loud and solemn choir,
With unexpressive notes to Heaven's new-born Heir.

Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made,
But when of old the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellation set,
And the well balanced world on hinges hung;
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres,
Once bless our human ears,
(If ye have power to touch our senses so;)
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time,
And let the base of Heaven's deep organ blow;
And, with your ninefold harmony,
Make up full concert to the angelic symphony.

For if such holy song
Inwrap our fancy long,
Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold;
And speckled vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mould;
And hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,
Orbed in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between,
Throned in celestial sheen;
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;
And Heaven, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

But wisest Fate says no,
This must not yet be so,
The babe yet lies in smiling infancy,
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss:
So both himself and us to glorify:
Yet first to those ychained in sleep,
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the deep!

With such a horrid clang
As on Mount Sinai rang,
While the red fire and smouldering clouds outbrake:
The aged earth aghast,
With terror of that blast,
Shall from the surface to the centre shake;
When, at the world's last session,
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread his throne

And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is,
But now begins; for from this happy day,
The old Dragon, under ground
In straiter limits bound,
Not half so far casts his usurped sway,
And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swindges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

The oracles are dumb,
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

The lonely mountains o'er,
And the resounding shore,
A voice of weeping heard and loud lament:
From haunted spring and dale,
Edged with poplar pale,
The parting Genius is with sighing sent;
With flower inwoven tresses torn
The nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

In consecrated earth,
And on the holy hearth,
The Lares, and Lemures, mourn with midnight plaint;
In urns, and altars round,
A drear and dying sound
Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar Power foregoes his wonted seat.

Peor and Baalim
Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice battered God of Palestine;*
And mooned Ashtaroth,
Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine;
The Libyc Hammon shrinks his horn,
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.

And sullen Moloch, fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
His burning idol all of blackest hue;
In vain with cymbals' ring
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance about the furnace blue:
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis haste.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove or green,
Trampling the unshowered grass with lowings loud:
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest;
Naught but profoundest hell can be his shroud;
In vain with timbrelled anthems dark
The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipped ark.

He feels from Judah's land
The dreaded Infant's hand,
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn;
Nor all the gods beside
Longer dare abide,
Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:
Our babe, to show his Godhead true,
Can in his swaddling bands control the damned crew.

So when the sun in bed,
Curtained with cloudy red,
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale
Troop to the infernal jail,
Each fettered ghost slips to his several grave;
And the yellow skirted fayes,
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-love maze.

But see, the Virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest;
Time is our tedious song should here have ending;
Heaven's youngest teemed star
Hath fixed her polished car,
Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending;
And all about the courtly stable
Bright harnessed angels sit in order serviceable.

THE PASSION.

Erewhile of music, and ethereal mirth,
Wherewith the stage of air and earth did ring,
And joyous news of heavenly Infant's birth,
My muse with angels did divide to sing;
But headlong joy is ever on the wing;
In wintry solstice like the shortened light,
Soon swallowed up in dark and long outliving night.

For now to sorrow must I tune my song,
And set my harp to notes of saddest wo,
Which on our dearest Lord did seize ere long,
Dangers, and snares, and wrongs, and worse than so,
Which he for us did freely undergo:
Most perfect Hero, tried in heaviest plight
Of labours huge and hard, too hard for human wight!

He, sovereign Priest, stooping his regal head,
That dropt with odorous oil down his fair eyes,
Poor fleshy tabernacle entered,
His starry front low rooft beneath the skies:
O what a mask was there, what a disguise:
Yet more; the stroke of death he must abide,
Then lies him meekly down fast by his brethren's side.

These latest scenes confine my roving verse;
To this horizon is my Phœbus bound:
His godlike acts, and his temptations fierce,
And former sufferings other where are found;
Loud o'er the rest Cremona's trump doth sound;*
Me softer airs befit, and softer strings
Of lute, or viol still, more apt for mournful things.

Befriend me, Night, best patroness of grief;
Over the pole thy thickest mantle throw,

* "*That twice-battered God of Palestine;*"—Dagon, first battered by Samson, then by the ark of God.

* "*Cremona's trump doth sound;*"—alluding to the *Christiad* of *Vida*, a native of Cremona.

And work my flattered fancy to belief,
That Heaven and Earth are coloured with my wo:
My sorrows are too dark for day to know:
The leaves should all be black whereon I write,
And letters, where my tears have washed, a wannish white.

See, see the chariot, and those rushing wheels,
That whirled the prophet up at Chebar flood;
My spirit some transporting cherub feels,
To bear me where the towers of Salem stood,
Once glorious towers, now sunk in guiltless blood;
There doth my soul in holy vision sit,
In pensive trance, and anguish, and ecstatic fit.

Mine eye hath found that sad sepulchral rock
That was the casket of Heaven's richest store,
And here through grief my feeble hands up lock,
Yet on the softened quarry would I score
My plaining verse as lively as before;
For sure so well instructed are my tears,
That they would fitly fall in ordered characters.

Or should I thence, hurried on viewless wing,
Take up a weeping on the mountains wild,
The gentle neighbourhood of grove and spring
Would soon unbosom all their echoes mild,
And I (for grief is easily beguiled)
Might think the infection of my sorrows loud
Had got a race of mourners on some pregnant cloud.

This subject the Author finding to be above the years he had, when he wrote it, and nothing satisfied with what was begun, left it unfinished.

ON TIME.*

Fly, envious Time, till thou run out thy race;
Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours,
Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace;
And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,
Which is no more than what is false and vain,
And merely mortal dross;
So little is our loss,
So little is thy gain!
For when as each thing bad thou hast entombed,
And last of all thy greedy self consumed,
Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss
With an individual kiss;
And joy shall overtake us as a flood,
When every thing that is sincerely good
And perfectly divine,
With truth, and peace, and love, shall ever shine
About the supreme throne
Of him, to whose happy making sight alone
When once our heavenly guided souls shall climb;
Then, all this earthly grossness quit,
Attired with stars, we shall for ever sit,
Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee,
O Time.

* In these poems where no date is prefixed, and no circumstances direct us to ascertain the time when they were composed, we follow the order of Milton's own editions. And before this copy of verses, it appears from the manuscript, that the poet had written, *To be set on a clock-case.*

UPON THE CIRCUMCISION.

Ye flaming powers, and winged warriors bright,
That erst with music, and triumphant song,
First heard by happy watchful shepherds' ear,
So sweetly sung your joy the clouds along
Through the soft silence of the listening night;
Now mourn; and, if sad share with us to bear
Your fiery essence can distil no tear,
Burn in your sighs, and borrow
Seas wept from our deep sorrow:
He, who with all Heaven's heraldry whilere
Entered the world, now bleeds to give us ease
Alas, how soon our sin
Sore doth begin
His infancy to seize!
O more exceeding love, or law more just!
Just law indeed, but more exceeding love!
For we, by rightful doom remediless,
Were lost in death, till he that dwelt above
High throned in secret bliss; for us frail dust
Emptied his glory, even to nakedness,
And that great covenant which we still transgress
Entirely satisfied;
And the full wrath beside
Of vengeful justice bore for our excess;
And seals obedience first, with wounding smart,
This day; but O, ere long,
Huge pangs and strong
Will pierce more near his heart.

AT A SOLEMN MUSIC.

Blest pair of Syrens, pledges of heavenly joy,
Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
Wed your divine sounds, and mixed power employ
Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce;
And to our high-raised fantasy present
That undisturbed song of pure consent,
Aye sung before the sapphire coloured throne
To him that sits thereon,
With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee;
Where the bright seraphim, in burning row,
Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow;
And the cherubic host, in thousand quires
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
With those just spirits that wear victorious palms,
Hymns devout and holy psalms,
Singing everlastingly:
That we on earth, with undiscording voice,
May rightly answer that melodious noise;

As once we did, till disproportioned sin
Jarred against Nature's chime, and with harsh din
Broke the fair music that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motions swayed
In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
In first obedience, and state of good.
O may we soon again renew that song,
And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long
To his celestial concert us unite,
To live with him, and sing in endless morn of light!

AN EPITAPH

ON THE MARCHIONESS OF WINCHESTER.

This rich marble doth inter
The honoured wife of Winchester,
A viscount's daughter, an earl's heir,
Besides what her virtues fair
Added to her noble birth,
More than she could own from earth.
Summers three times eight save one
She had told; alas! too soon,
After so short time of breath,
To house with darkness, and with death.
Yet had the number of her days
Been as complete as was her praise,
Nature and Fate had had no strife,
In giving limit to her life.
  Her high birth, and graces sweet,
Quickly found a lover meet;
The virgin choir for her request
The God that sits at marriage feast;
He at their invoking came,
But with a scarce well-lighted flame:
And in his garland, as he stood,
Ye might discern a cypress bud.
Once had the early matrons run
To greet her of a lovely son,
And now with second hope she goes,
And calls Lucina to her throes;
But, whether by mischance or blame
Atropos for Lucina came;
And with remorseless cruelty
Spoiled at once both fruit and tree:
The hapless babe, before his birth,
Had burial, yet not laid in earth;
And the languished mother's womb
Was not long a living tomb.
  So have I seen some tender slip,
Saved with care from winter's nip,
The pride of her carnation train,
Plucked up by some unheedy swain,
Who only thought to crop the flower
New shot up from vernal shower;
But the fair blossom hangs the head
Sideways as on a dying bed,
And those pearls of dew she wears,
Prove to be presaging tears,
Which the sad morn had let fall
On her hastening funeral.
  Gentle lady, may thy grave
Peace and quiet ever have;
After this thy travail sore
Sweet rest seize thee ever more,
That, to give the world increase,
Shortened hast thy own life's lease.
Here, besides the sorrowing
That thy noble house doth bring,
Here be tears of perfect moan
Wept for thee in Helicon;
And some flowers, and some bays,
For thy hearse, to strew the ways,
Sent thee from the banks of Came,
Devoted to thy virtuous name;
Whilst thou, bright Saint, high sit'st in glory
Next her, much like to thee in story,
That fair Syrian shepherdess,
Who, after years of barrenness,
The highly favoured Joseph bore
To him that served for her before,
And at her next birth, much like thee,
Through pangs fled to felicity,
Far within the bosom bright
Of blazing Majesty and Light;
There with thee, new welcome Saint,
Like fortunes may her soul acquaint,
With thee there clad in radiant sheen;
No marchioness, but now a queen.

SONG ON MAY MORNING.

Now the bright morning-star, day's harbinger,
Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
The flowery May, who from her green lap throws
The yellow cowslip, and the pale primrose.
  Hail, bounteous May, that doth inspire
  Mirth, and youth, and warm desire;
  Woods and groves are of thy dressing,
  Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing.
Thus we salute thee with our early song,
And welcome thee, and wish thee long.

ON SHAKSPEARE. 1630.

What needs my Shakspeare for his honoured bones,
The labour of an age in piled stones?
Or that his hallowed relics should be hid
Under a star-ypointing pyramid?
Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?
Thou in our wonder and astonishment
Hast built thyself a live-long monument.

For whilst, to the shame of slow-endeavouring art,
Thy easy numbers flow: and that each heart
Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued book,
Those Delphic lines with deep impression took;
Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
Dost make us marble with too much conceiving;
And so sepulchred, in such pomp dost lie,
That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die.

ON THE UNIVERSITY CARRIER,

Who sickened in the time of his vacancy, being forbid to go to London, by reason of the plague.

HERE lies old Hobson; Death has broke his girt,
And here, alas! hath laid him in the dirt;
Or else the ways being foul, twenty to one,
He's here stuck in a slough, and overthrown.
'Twas such a shifter, that, if truth were known,
Death was half glad when he had got him down;
For he had, any time these ten years full,
Dodged with him, betwixt Cambridge and *The Bull.*
And surely Death could never have prevailed,
Had not his weekly course of carriage failed;
But lately finding him so long at home,
And thinking now his journey's end was come,
And that he had ta'en up his latest inn,
In the kind office of a chamberlain
Showed him his room where he must lodge that night,
Pulled off his boots, and took away the light:
If any ask for him, it shall be said,
'Hobson has supped, and 's newly gone to bed.'

ANOTHER ON THE SAME.

HERE lieth one, who did most truly prove
That he could never die while he could move;
So hung his destiny, never to rot,
While he might still jog on and keep his trot,
Made of sphere-metal, never to decay
Until his revolution was at stay.
Time numbers motion, yet (without a crime
'Gainst old truth) motion numbered out his time;
And, like an engine moved with wheel and weight,
His principles being ceased, he ended straight.
Rest, that gives all men life, gave him his death,
And too much breathing put him out of breath;
Nor were it contradiction to affirm,
Too long vacation hastened on his term.
Merely to drive the time away he sickened,
Fainted, and died, nor would with ale be quickened;
'Nay,' quoth he, on his swooning bed outstretch'd;
'If I may'nt carry, sure I'll ne'er be fetched,
But, vow, though the cross doctors all stood hearers,
For one carrier put down to make six bearers.'
Ease was his chief disease; and, to judge right,
He died for heaviness that his cart went light:
His leisure told him that his time was come,
And lack of load made his life burdensome,
That even to his last breath, (there be that say't,)
As he were pressed to death, he cried, more weight;
But, had his doings lasted as they were,
He had been an immortal carrier.
Obedient to the moon he spent his date
In course reciprocal, and had his fate
Linked to the mutual flowing of the seas,
Yet (strange to think) his *wain* was his *increase.*
His letters are delivered all and gone,
Only remains this superscription.

L'ALLEGRO.

HENCE, loathed Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!
Found out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night raven sings;
There, under ebon shades, and low-browed rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
But come, thou goddess, fair and free,
In Heaven yclep'd Euphrosyne,
And by Men, heart-easing Mirth;
Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
With two sister Graces more,
To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore:
Or whether (as some sages sing)
The frolic wind, that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a Maying;
There on beds of violets blue,
The fresh-blown roses washed in dew,
Filled her with thee a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
Jest, and youthful Jollity,
Quips, and Cranks, and wanton Wiles,
Nods, and Becks, and wreathed Smiles
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides:
Come, and trip it, as you go,
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee,
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty;
And, if I give thee honour due.
Mirth admit me of thy crew,

To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreproved pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night
From his watchtower in the skies
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good morrow,
Through the sweet brier, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:
While the cock, with lively din,
Scatters the rear of darkness thin;
And to the stack, or the barn door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft list'ning how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Sometime walking, not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate,
Where the great sun begins his state,
Robed in flames, and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
And the milk maid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landscape round it measures,
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray,
Mountains, on whose barren breast
The lab'ring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide:
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The cynosure* of neighbouring eyes.
Hard by a cottage chimney smokes,
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met,
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves:
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tanned haycock in the mead.
Sometimes with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecs sound
To many a youth, and many a maid,
Dancing in the chequered shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holy-day,
Till the livelong daylight fail:
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How fairy Mab the junkets eat;
She was pinched, and pulled, she said:
And he, by friar's lantern led,
Tells how the drudging goblin sweat,
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn,
That ten day-labourers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubber fiend,
And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
And cropful out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.
Towered cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit, or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend,
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask, and antique pageantry;
Such sights as youthful poets dream,
On summer eves by haunted stream,
Then to the well trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakspeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native woodnotes wild.

And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse;
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes, with many a winding bout,
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half-regained Eurydice.

These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live:

* "Cynosure *of neighbouring eyes.*"—The pole star, in the lesser bear

IL PENSEROSO.

HENCE, vain deluding joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred!
How little you bested,
Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sunbeams;
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
But hail, thou goddess, sage and holy,
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starred Ethiop queen* that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The sea-nymphs, and their powers offended:
Yet thou art higher far descended:
The bright-haired Vesta, long of yore,
To solitary Saturn bore;
His daughter she; (in Saturn's reign,
Such mixture was not held a stain;)
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove.
Come, pensive nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing, with majestic train,
And sable stole of Cyprus lawn,
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step and musing gait,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy wrapt soul sitting in thine eyes;
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast:
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing:
And add to these retired Leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure:
But first, and chiefest, with thee bring,
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
The cherub Contemplation:
And the mute Silence hist along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest, saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of night,
While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,
Gently o'er the accustomed oak,
Sweet bird, that shunnest the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chantress, oft, the woods among,
I woo, to hear thy even-song;
And, missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the Heaven's wide pathless way;
And oft, as if her head she bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar.
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some still removed place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the belman's drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm.
Or let my lamp at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I might oft outwatch the Bear,
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind, that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshy nook:
And of those demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet, or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In sceptered pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine;
Or what (though rare) of latter age
Ennobled hath the buskined stage.
But, O sad Virgin, that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower!
Or bid the souls of Orpheus sing
Such notes, as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made hell grant what love did seek!
Or call up him that left half-told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,

* "*That starred Ethiop queen*"—Cassiope, wife of Cepheus

That owned the virtuous ring and glass:
And of the wondrous horse of brass,
On which the Tartar king did ride:
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of turneys, and of trophies hung,
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus, night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited morn appear,
Not tricked and frounced as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kercheft in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or ushered with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute drops from off the eaves.
And, when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring,
To arched walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe, with heaved stroke,
Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
There in close covert by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye;
While the bee with honied thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing
And the waters murmuring,
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feathered sleep;
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings in airy stream
Of lively portraiture displayed,
Softly on my eyelids laid.
And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
About, above, or underneath,
Sent by some spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen genius of the wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloisters pale,
And love the high embowed roof,
With antic pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light:
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voiced choir below,
In service high, and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstacies,
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heaven doth show
And every herb that sips the dew:
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

ARCADES.

Part of an entertainment presented to the *Countess Dowager* of *Derby* at Harefield, by some noble persons of her family; who appear on the scene in pastoral habit, moving toward the seat of state, with this song.

I. SONG.

Look, nymphs and shepherds, look,
What sudden blaze of majesty
Is that which we from hence descry,
Too divine to be mistook:
This, this is she
To whom our vows and wishes bend;
Here our solemn search hath end.
Fame, that, her high worth to raise,
Seemed erst so lavish and profuse,
We may just now accuse
Of detraction from her praise;
Less than half we find exprest,
Envy bid conceal the rest.
Mark, what radiant state she spreads,
In circle round her shining throne,
Shooting her beams like silver threads;
This, this is she alone,
Sitting like a goddess bright,
In the centre of her light.
Might she the wise Latona be,
Or the towered Cybele,
Mother of a hundred gods?
Juno dares not give her odds;
Who had thought this clime had held
A deity so unparalleled?

As they come forward, the *Genius* of the wood appears, and turning towards them, speaks.

Genius.

Stay, gentle swains, for, though in this disguise,
I see bright honour sparkle through your eyes;
Of famous Arcady ye are, and sprung
Of that renowned flood, so often sung,
Divine Alpheus, who by secret sluice
Stole under seas to meet his Arethuse,
And ye, the breathing roses of the wood,
Fair silver buskined nymphs, as great and good,
I know this quest of yours, and free intent,
Was all in honour and devotion meant
To the great mistress of yon princely shrine,
Whom with low reverence I adore as mine;
And, with all helpful service will comply
To further this night's glad solemnity;

And lead ye where ye may more near behold
What shallow searching fame hath left untold;
Which I full oft, amidst these shades alone,
Have sat to wonder at, and gaze upon:
For know, by lot from Jove, I am the power
Of this fair wood, and live in oaken bower,
To nurse the saplings tall, and curl the grove
With ringlets quaint, and wanton windings wove.
And all my plants I save from nightly ill
Of noisome winds, and blasting vapours chill:
And from the boughs brush off the evil dew,
And heal the harms of thwarting thunder blue,
Or what the cross dire looking planet smites,
Or hurtful worm with cankered venom bites.
When evening gray doth rise, I fetch my round
Over the mount, and all this hallowed ground;
And early, ere the odorous breath of morn
Awakes the slumbering leaves, or tasseled horn
Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about,
Number my ranks, and visit every sprout
With puissant words, and murmurs made to bless.
But else in deep of night, when drowsiness
Hath locked up mortal sense, then listen I
To the celestial Syren's harmony,
That sit upon the nine infolded spheres,
And sing to those that hold the vital shears.
And turn the adamantine spindle round,
On which the fate of gods and men is wound.
Such sweet compulsion doth in music lie,
To lull the daughters of Necessity,
And keep unsteady Nature to her law,
And the low world in measured motion draw
After the heavenly tune, which none can hear
Of human mould, with gross unpurged ear:
And yet such music worthiest were to blaze
The peerless height of her immortal praise,
Whose lustre leads us, and for her most fit,
If my inferior hand or voice could hit
Inimitable sounds: yet, as we go,
Whate'er the skill of lesser gods can show,
I will assay, her worth to celebrate,
And so attend ye toward her glittering state;
Where ye may all, that are of noble stem,
Approach, and kiss her sacred vesture's hem.

II. SONG.

O'er the smooth enameled green,
Where no print of step hath been
Follow me, as I sing
And touch the warbled string,
Under the shady roof
Of branching elm star-proof.
Follow me:
I will bring you where she sits,
Clad in splendour as befits,
Her deity.
Such a rural queen
All Arcadia hath not seen.

III. SONG.

Nymphs and Shepherds, dance no more
By sandy Ladon's lilied banks:
On old Lycæus, or Cyllene hoar,
Trip no more in twilight ranks;
Though Erymanth your loss deplore,
A better soil shall give ye thanks.
From the stony Mænalus
Bring your flocks, and live with us;
Here ye shall have greater grace,
To serve the lady of this place.
Though Syrinx your Pan's mistress were,
Yet Syrinx well might wait on her.
Such a rural queen
All Arcadia hath not seen.

LYCIDAS.

In this monody the author bewails a learned Friend, unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish seas, 1637, and by occasion foretells the ruin of our corrupted clergy, then in their height.

YET once more, O ye laurels, and once more
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And, with forced fingers rude,
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year:
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due:
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and has not left his peer:
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.
Begin then, sisters of the sacred well,
That from beneath the seat of jove doth spring
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse
So may some gentle Muse*
With lucky words favour my destined urn;
And, as he passes, turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.
For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill
Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night
Oft till the star that rose at evening bright,
Toward Heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel.

* "*So may some gentle Muse*"—Muse in the masculine gender here means Poet

Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Tempered to the oaten flute;
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long;
And old Damœtas loved to hear our song.
But, O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee, shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes mourn:
The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays,
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the whitethorn blows;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.
Where were ye, nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed over the head of your loved Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep,
Where your old bards, the famous Druids lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream:
Ah me! I fondly dream!
Had ye been there—for what could that have done?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?
Alas! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely slighted shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days:
But the fair guerdon, when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears:
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies:
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfect witness of all judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in Heaven expect thy meed."
O fountain Arethuse, and thou honoured flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds.
That strain I heard was of a higher mood:
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the herald of the sea*
That came in Neptune's plea:
He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain:
And questioned every gust of rugged wings,
That blows from off each beaked promontory:
They know not of his story;
And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed:
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters played.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.
Next, Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with wo.
'Ah! who hath reft (quoth he) my dearest pledge?'
Last came, and last did go,
The pilot of the Galilean lake;
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain,
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain,)
He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake:
"How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as for their bellies' sake
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold?
Of other care they little reckoning make,
Than how to scramble at the shearer's feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest:
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheephook, or have learned aught else the least
That to the faithful herdsman's art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swollen with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said:
But that two-handed engine† at the door,
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."
Return, Alpheus, the dread voice is past,
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells, and flow'rets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks;
Throw hither all your quaint enameled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honied shower,

* "The herald of the sea."—*Triton.*

† "Two-handed engine."—*the axe of reformation.*

And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crowtoe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet,
The muskrose, and the well attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears:
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffodillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureat hearse where Lycid lies.
For, so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.
Ah me? Whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled,
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps, under the whelming tide,
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,*
Where the great vision of the guarded mount
Looks towards Namancos and Bayona's hold;
Look homeward, angel, now, and melt with ruth:
And, O ye Dolphins, waft the hapless youth.
  Weep no more, woful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor;
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of him that walk'd the waves;
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love,
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and, singing, in their glory move,
And wipe the tears forever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.
  Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray,
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay:
At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue;
To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new.

* "*The fable of Bellerus old,*" &c. The Bellerian promontory or Land's end in Cornwall, near which is Mount St. Michael, a fortress on a rock, named from a supposed vision or apparition of St. Michael.

ON THE NEW FORCERS OF CONSCIENCE UNDER THE LONG PARLIAMENT.

Because you have thrown off your prelate lord,
  And with stiff vows renounced his liturgy,
  To seize the widowed whore Plurality
  From them whose sin ye envied, not abhorred;
Dare ye for this abjure the civil sword
  To force our consciences that Christ set free,
  And ride us with a classic hierarchy
  Taught ye by mere A. S. and Rotherford?
Men, whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent
  Would have been held in high esteem with Paul,
  Must now be named and printed heretics
By shallow Edwards and Scotch what d'ye call:
  But we do hope to find out all your tricks,
  Your plots and packing worse than those of Trent.
    That so the parliament
May with their wholesome and preventive shears,
Clip your phylacteries, though bauk your ears,
    And succour our just fears
When they shall read this clearly in your charge,
New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large.

Sonnets.

TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

O NIGHTINGALE, that on yon bloomy spray
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still;
Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,
While the jolly hours lead on propitious May,
Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day,
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,
Portend success in love; O if Jove's will
Have linked that amorous power to thy soft lay,
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate
Foretell my hopeless doom in some grove nigh;
As thou from year to year hast sung too late
For my relief, yet had'st no reason why:
Whether the Muse, or Love call thee his mate,
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

ON HIS BEING ARRIVED TO THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE.

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stolen on his wing my three-and-twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud nor blossom showeth.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
That I to manhood am arrived so near;
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely happy spirits indueth.
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which time leads me, and the will of Heaven;
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Taskmaker's eye.

WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY.

CAPTAIN, or colonel, or knight in arms,
Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,
If deed of honour did thee ever please,
Guard them, and him within protect from harms.
He can requite thee; for he knows the charms
That call fame on such gentle acts as these,
And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,
Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.
Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bower:
The great Emathian conqueror bid spare
The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
Went to the ground: and the repeated air
Of sad Electra's poet had the power
To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

TO A VIRTUOUS YOUNG LADY.

LADY, that in the prime of earliest youth
Wisely hast shunned the broadway and the green,
And with those few art eminently seen,
That labour up the hill of heavenly truth,
The better part with Mary and with Ruth
Chosen thou hast; and they that overween,
And at thy growing virtues fret their spleen,
No anger find in thee, but piety and ruth.
Thy care is fixed, and zealously attends
To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of light,
And hope that reaps not shame. Therefore be sure
Thou, when the bridegroom with his feastful friends
Passes to bliss at the mid hour of night,
Hast gained thy entrance, virgin wise and pure.

TO THE LADY MARGARET LEY.

DAUGHTER to that good earl, once president
Of England's council and her treasury,
Who lived in both, unstained with gold or fee,
And left them both, more in himself content,
Till sad the breaking of that Parliament
Broke him, as that dishonest victory
At Chæronea, fatal to liberty,
Killed with report that old man eloquent.
Though later born than to have known the days
Wherein your father flouished, yet by you,
Madam, methinks I see him living yet;
So well your words his noble virtues praise,
That all both judge you to relate them true,
And to possess them, honoured Margaret.

ON THE DETRACTION WHICH FOLLOWED UPON MY WRITING CERTAIN TREATISES.

A BOOK was writ of late called *Tetrachordon*,
And woven close, both matter, form, and style:
The subject new: it walked the town a while,
Numbering good intellects; now seldom pored on.
Cries the stall-reader, Bless us! what a word on
A title page is this! and some in file
Stand spelling false, while one might walk to Mile-
End Green. Why is it harder, Sirs, than Gordon,
Colkitto, or Macdonnel, or Galasp?
Those rugged names to our like mouths grow sleek,

That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp.
Thy age, like ours, O soul of Sir John Cheek,
Hated not learning worse than toad or asp,
When thou taught'st Cambridge, and King Edward Greek.

ON THE SAME.

I DID but prompt the age to quit their clogs
By the known rules of ancient liberty,
When straight a barbarous noise environs me
Of owls and cuckoos, asses, apes, and dogs:
As when those hinds that were transformed to frogs
Railed at Latona's twin-born progeny,
Which after held the sun and moon in fee.
But this is got by casting pearl to hogs;
That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,
And still revolt when truth would set them free.
License they mean when they cry liberty;
For who loves that, must first be wise and good;
But from that mark how far they rove we see,
For all this waste of wealth, and loss of blood.

TO MR. H. LAWES,

ON THE PUBLISHING HIS AIRS.

HARRY, whose tuneful and well measured song
First taught our English music how to span
Words with just note and accent not to scan
With Midas' ears, committing short and long;
Thy worth and skill exempts thee from the throng,
With praise enough for envy to look wan;
To after age thou shalt be writ the man,
That with smooth air could'st humour best our tongue.
Thou honour'st verse, and verse must lend her wing
To honour thee the priest of Phœbus' choir,
That tun'st their happiest lines in hymn, or story.
Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher
Than his Casella, whom he wooed to sing
Met in the milder shades of purgatory.

ON THE RELIGIOUS MEMORY

OF MRS. CATHARINE THOMSON, MY CHRISTIAN FRIEND, DECEASED 16th DECEMBER, 1646.

WHEN faith and love, which parted from thee never,
Had ripened thy just soul to dwell with God,
Meekly thou did'st resign the earthy load
Of death, called life; which us from life doth sever.
Thy works, and alms, and all thy good endeavour
Stayed not behind, nor in the grave were trod;
But, as Faith pointed with her golden rod,
Followed thee up to joy and bliss for ever.
Love led them on, and Faith, who knew them best.
Thy handmaids, clad them o'er with purple beam
And azure wings, that up they flew so drest,
And spake the truth of thee on glorious themes
Before the Judge; who thenceforth bid thee rest,
And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

TO THE LORD GENERAL FAIRFAX.

FAIRFAX, whose name in arms through Europe rings,
Filling each mouth with envy or with praise,
And all her jealous monarchs with amaze
And rumours loud, that daunt remotest kings,
Thy firm unshaken virtue ever brings
Victory home, though new rebellions raise
Their hydra heads, and the false north displays
Her broken league to imp their serpent wings.
O yet a nobler task awaits thy hand,
(For what can war, but endless war still breed?)
Till truth and right from violence be freed,
And public faith cleared from the shameful brand
Of public fraud. In vain doth valour bleed,
While avarice and rapine share the land.

TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL.

CROMWELL, our chief of men, who through a cloud,
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast plonghed,
And on the neck of crowned Fortune proud
Hast reared God's trophies, and his work pursued,
While Darwen stream, with blood of Scots imbrued,
And Dunbar field, resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laureat wreath. Yet much remains
To conquer still; peace hath her victories
No less renowned than war: new foes arise
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains.
Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves, whose Gospel is their maw

TO SIR HENRY VANE,

THE YOUNGER.

VANE, young in years, but in sage counsel old,
Than whom a better senator ne'er held

The helm of Rome, when gowns, not arms repelled
The fierce Epirot and the African bold;
Whether to settle peace or to unfold
The drift of hollow states hard to be spelled;
Then to advise how war may, best upheld,
Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
In all her equipage: besides to know
Both spiritual power and civil, what each means,
What severs each, thou hast learned, which few have done;
The bounds of either sword to thee we owe:
Therefore on thy firm hand Religion leans
In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son.

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEMONT.

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese that roiled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To Heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred fold, who, having learned thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

ON HIS BLINDNESS.

When I consider how my life is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he returning, chide;
Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?
I fondly ask: But patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, God doth not need
Either man's work, or his own gifts; who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best; his state
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait.

TO MR. LAWRENCE.

Lawrence, of virtuous father, virtuous son,
Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
Help waste a sullen day, what may be won
From the hard season gaining? Time will run
On smoother, till Favonius reinspire
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
The lily and rose, that neither sowed nor spun.
What neat repast shall feast us; light and choice,
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise
To hear the lute well touched or artful voice
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?
He who of those delights can judge, and spare
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

TO CYRIAC SKINNER.

Cyriac, whose grandsire, on the royal bench
Of British Themis, with no mean applause
Pronounced, and in his volumes taught, our laws,
Which others at their bar so often wrench;
To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench
In mirth, that, after, no repenting draws;
Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,
And what the Swede intends, and what the French
To measure life learn thou betimes, and know
Toward solid good what leads the nearest way;
For other things mild Heaven a time ordains,
And disapproves that care, though wise in show,
That with superfluous burden loads the day
And, when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

ON HIS DECEASED WIFE.*

Methought I saw my late espoused saint
Brought to me, like Alcestis, from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescued from death by force, tho' pale and faint.
Mine, as whom wash'd from spot of child-bed taint
Purification in the' old Law did save,
And such, as yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind:
Her face was veil'd; yet to my fancied sight
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shin'd
So clear, as in no face with more delight:
But O! as to embrace me she inclin'd,
I wak'd; she fled; and day brought back my night.

* This sonnet was written about the year 1656, on the death of his second wife, Catharine, the daughter of Captain Woodcock, of Hackney, a rigid sectarist. She died in child-bed of a daughter, within a year after their marriage. Milton had now been long totally blind.

TO CYRIAC SKINNER.

Cyriac, these three years' day these eyes, tho' clear,
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
Bereft of light their seeing have forgot;
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?
The conscience, friend, to have lost them overplied
In liberty's defence, my noble task,
Of which all Europe rings from side to side.
This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask
Content though blind, had I no better guide.

Translations.

THE FIFTH ODE OF HORACE, LIB. I.

What slender youth, bedew'd with liquid odours,
Courts thee on roses in some pleasant cave,
Pyrrha? For whom bind'st thou
In wreaths thy golden hair,
Plain in thy neatness? O, how oft shall he
On faith and changed gods complain, and seas
Rough with black winds and storms
Unwonted shall admire!
Who now enjoys thee credulous, all gold,
Who always vacant, always amiable
Hopes thee, of flattering gales
Unmindful. Hapless they
To whom thou untried seem'st fair! Me, in my vow'd
Picture, the sacred wall declares to have hung
My dank and dropping weeds
To the stern god of sea.

FROM GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH.*

Brutus *thus addresses* Diana *in the country of* Leogecia.

Goddess of shades, and huntress, who at will
Walk'st on the rolling spheres, and through the deep;
On thy third reign, the earth, look now, and tell
What land, what seat of rest, thou bid'st me seek;
What certain seat, where I may worship thee
For aye, with temples vow'd and virgin quires.

To whom, sleeping before the altar, Diana *answers in a vision, the same night.*

Brutus, far to the west, in the ocean wide,
Beyond the realm of Gaul, a land there lies,
Sea-girt it lies, where giants dwelt of old;
Now void, it fits thy people: thither bend
Thy course; there shalt thou find a lasting seat;
There to thy sons another Troy shall rise,
And kings be born of thee, whose dreadful might
Shall awe the world, and conquer nations bold.

* Hist. Brit. l. xi. "Diva potens nemorum," &c.

FROM DANTE.

Ah, Constantine, of how much ill was cause,
Not thy conversion, but those rich domains
That the first wealthy pope receiv'd of thee.

FROM DANTE.

Founded in chaste and humble poverty,
'Gainst them that rais'd thee dost thou lift thy horn,
Impudent whore, where hast thou plac'd thy hope?
In thy adulterers, or thy ill-got wealth?
Another Constantine comes not in haste.

FROM ARIOSTO.

Then pass'd he to a flowery mountain green,
Which once smelt sweet, now stinks as odiously
This was the gift, if you the truth will have,
That Constantine to good Sylvester gave.

FROM HORACE.

Whom do we count a good man? Whom but he
Who keeps the laws and statutes of the senate,
Who judges in great suits and controversies,
Whose witness and opinion wins the cause?
But his own house, and the whole neighbourhood
Sees his foul inside through his whited skin.

FROM EURIPIDES.

This is true liberty, when freeborn men,
Having to' advise the public, may speak free;
Which he who can, and will, deserves high praise
Who neither can, nor will, may hold his peace;
What can be juster in a state than this?

FROM HORACE.

——Laughing to teach the truth,
What hinders? As some teachers give to boys
Junkets and knacks, that they may learn apace

FROM HORACE.

——Joking decides great things,
Stronger and better oft than earnest can

FROM SOPHOCLES.

'Tis you that say it, not I. You do the deeds,
And your ungodly deeds find me the words.

FROM SENECA.

———There can be slain
No sacrifice to God more acceptable,
Than an unjust and wicked king.

PSALM I.

Done into verse, 1653

Blessed is the man who hath not walked astray
In counsel of the wicked, and i' the way
Of sinners hath not stood, and in the seat
Of scorners hath not sat: but in the great
Jehovah's law is ever his delight,
And in his law he studies day and night.
He shall be as a tree which planted grows
By watery streams, and in his season knows
To yield his fruit, and his leaf shall not fall,
And what he takes in hand shall prosper all.
Not so the wicked, but as chaff which fann'd
The wind drives, so the wicked shall not stand
In judgment, or abide their trial then,
Nor sinners in the assembly of just men.
For the Lord knows the upright way of the just,
And the way of bad men to ruin must.

PSALM II.

Done Aug. 8, 1653. *Terzetti.*

Why do the Gentiles tumult, and the Nations
Muse a vain thing, the kings of the earth upstand
With power, and princes in their congregations
Lay deep their plots together through each land
Against the Lord and his Messiah dear?
Let us break off, say they, by strength of hand
Their bonds, and cast from us, no more to wear,
Their twisted cords: He, who in heaven doth dwell,
Shall laugh; the Lord shall scoff them; then, severe,
Speak to them in his wrath, and in his fell
And fierce ire trouble them; but I, saith he,
Anointed have my King (though ye rebel)
On Sion my holy hill. A firm decree
I will declare: The Lord to me hath said,
Thou art my Son, I have begotten thee
This day; ask of me, and the grant is made;
As thy possession I on thee bestow
The heathen; and, as thy conquest to be sway'd,
Earth's utmost bounds: them shalt thou bring full low
With iron sceptre bruised, and them disperse
Like to a potter's vessel shivered so.
And now be wise at length, ye kings averse,
Be taught, ye judges of the earth; with fear
Jehovah serve, and let your joy converse
With trembling; kiss the Son, lest he appear
In anger and ye perish in the way,
If once his wrath take fire, like fuel sere,
Happy all those who have in him their stay.

PSALM III. *Aug.* 9, 1653.

When he fled from Absalom.

Lord, how many are my foes!
How many those,
That in arms against me rise.
Many are they,
That of my life distrustfully thus say;
No help for him in God there lies.

But thou, Lord, art my shield, my glory
Thee, through my story,
The exalter of my head I count
Aloud I cried
Unto Jehovah, he full soon replied,
And heard me from his holy mount.

I lay and slept; I waked again;
For my sustain
Was the Lord. Of many millions
The populous rout
I fear not, though, encamping round about,
They pitch against me their pavilions.

Rise, Lord; save me, my God; for thou
Hast smote, ere now
On the cheek-bone all my foes,
Of men abhorred
Hast broke the teeth. This help was from the Lord;
Thy blessing on thy people flows.

PSALM IV. *Aug.* 10, 1653.

Answer me when I call,
God of my righteousness;
In straits and in distress,
Thou didst me disenthrall
And set at large; now spare,
Now pity me, and hear my earnest prayer.
Great ones, how long will ye
My glory have in scorn?
How long be thus forborne
Still to love vanity?
To love, to seek, to prize,
Things false and vain, and nothing else but lies?
Yet know the Lord hath chose,
Chose to himself apart,
The good and meek of heart;
(For whom to choose he knows)
Jehovah from on high
Will hear my voice, what time to him I cry.
Be awed, and do not sin;

Speak to your hearts alone,
Upon your beds, each one,
And be at peace within:
Offer the offerings just
Of righteousness, and in Jehovah trust.
Many there be that say,
Who yet will show us good?
Talking like this world's brood;
But, Lord, thus let me pray;
On us lift up the light,
Lift up the favour of thy countenance bright.
Into my heart more joy
And gladness thou hast put,
Than when a year of glut
Their stores doth over-cloy,
And from their plenteous grounds
With vast increase their corn and wine abounds.
In peace at once will I
Both lay me down and sleep;
For thou alone dost keep
Me safe where'er I lie;
As in a rocky cell
Thou, Lord! alone, in safety makest me dwell.

PSALM V. *Aug.* 12, 1653.

Jehovah! to my words give ear,
My meditation weigh;
The voice of my complaining hear,
My King and God; for unto thee I pray.
Jehovah! thou my early voice
Shalt in the morning hear;
I' the morning I to thee with choice
Will rank my prayers, and watch till thou appear.
For thou art not a God that takes
In wickedness delight;
Evil with thee no biding makes;
Fools or madmen stand not within thy sight.
All workers of iniquity
Thou hat'st; and them unblessed
Thou wilt destroy that speak a lie;
The bloody and guileful man God doth detest.
But I will, in thy mercies dear,
Thy numerous mercies, go
Into thy house; I, in thy fear,
Will toward thy holy temple worship low.
Lord! lead me in thy righteousness,
Lead me, because of those
That do observe if I transgress;
Set thy ways right before, where my step goes.
For in his faltering mouth unstable,
No word is firm or sooth,
Their inside, troubles miserable;
An open grave their throat, their tongue they smooth.
God! find them guilty, let them fall
By their own counsels quelled;
Push them in their rebellions all
Still on; for against thee they have rebelled.
Then all, who trust in thee, shall bring
Their joy; while thou from blame
Defend'st them, they shall ever sing
And shall triumph in thee, who love thy name
For thou, Jehovah! wilt be found
To bless the just man still;
As with a shield, thou wilt surround
Him with thy lasting favour and good will.

PSALM VI. *Aug.* 13, 1653.

Lord, in thine anger do not reprehend me,
Nor in thy hot displeasure me correct;
Pity me, Lord, for I am much deject,
And very weak and faint; heal and amend me:
For all my bones, that ev'n with anguish ake,
Are troubled, yea my soul is troubled sore,
And thou, O Lord! how long? Turr, Lord restore
My soul; O save me for thy goodness' sake!
For in death no remembrance is of thee;
Who in the grave can celebrate thy praise?
Wearied I am with sighing out my days;
Nightly my couch I make a kind of sea;
My bed I water with my tears; mine eye
Through grief consumes, is waxen old and dark
I' the midst of all mine enemies that mark.
Depart, all ye that work iniquity,
Depart from me; for the voice of my weeping
The Lord hath heard; the Lord hath heard my prayer;
My supplication with acceptance fair
The Lord will own, and have me in his keeping.
Mine enemies shall all be blank, and dashed
With much confusion; then, grown red with shame,
They shall return in haste the way they came,
And in a moment shall be quite abash'd.

PSALM VII. *Aug.* 14, 1653.

Upon the words of Cush, the Benjamite, against him.

Lord, my God, to thee I fly;
Save me and secure me under
Thy protection, while I cry;
Lest, as the lion, (and no wonder,)
He haste to tear my soul asunder,
Tearing, and no rescue nigh.

Lord, my God, if I have thought
Or done this; if wickedness
Be in my hands; if I have wrought
Ill to him that meant me peace
Or to him have rendered less,
And not freed my foe for nought;

Let the enemy pursue my soul
And overtake it; let him tread
My life down to the earth, and roll

In the dust my glory dead,
In the dust; and, there outspread,
Lodge it with dishonour foul.

Rise, Jehovah! in thine ire,
Rouse thyself amidst the rage
Of my foes, that urge like fire;
And wake for me, their fury assuage;
Judgment here thou didst engage
And command, which I desire.

So the assemblies of each nation
Will surround thee, seeking right;
Thence to thy glorious habitation
Return on high, and in their sight.
Jehovah judgeth most upright
All people from the world's foundation.

Judge me, Lord; be judge in this
According to my righteousness,
And the innocence which is
Upon me: cause at length to cease
Of evil men the wickedness,
And their power that do amiss.

But the just establish fast.
Since thou art the just God that tries
Hearts and reins. On God is cast
My defence, and in him lies.
In him who, both just and wise,
Saves the upright of heart at last.

God is a just judge and severe,
And God is every day offended;
If the unjust will not forbear,
His sword he whets, his bow hath bended
Already, and for him intended
The tools of death that wait him near.

(His arrows purposely made he
For them that persecute:) Behold
He travails big with vanity;
Trouble he hath conceived of old,
As in a womb; and from that mould
Hath at length brought forth a lie.

He digged a pit, and delved it deep,
And fell into the pit he made;
His mischief, that due course doth keep
Turns on his head; and his ill trade
Of violence will, undelayed,
Fall on his crown with ruin steep.

Then will I Jehovah's praise
According to his justice raise,
And sing the Name and Deity
Of Jehovah the Most High!

PSALM VIII. *Aug.* 14, 1653.

O Jehovah, our Lord, how wondrous great
And glorious is thy Name through all the earth!

So as above the heavens thy praise to set
Out of the tender mouths of latest birth.

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou
Hast founded strength, because of all thy foes,
To stint the enemy, and slack th' avenger's brow,
That bends his rage thy Providence t' oppose.

When I behold thy heavens, thy fingers' art,
The moon, and stars, which thou so bright hast set
In the pure firmament: then saith my heart,
O, what is man that thou rememberest yet,

And think'st upon him; or of man begot,
That him thou visit'st, and of him art found!
Scarce to be less than gods, thou mad'st his lot,
With honour and with state thou hast him crowned.

O'er the works of thy hand thou mad'st him Lord,
Thou hast put all under his lordly feet;
All flocks, and herds, by thy commanding word,
All beasts that in the field or forest meet;

Fowl of the heavens, and fish that through the wet
Sea-paths in shoals do slide, and know no dearth:
O Jehovah, our Lord, how wondrous great
And glorious is thy name through all the earth!

April, 1648. J. M.

Nine of the Psalms done into metre, wherein all, but what is in a different character, are the very words of the text: translated from the original.

PSALM LXXX.

1 Thou, Shepherd, that dost Israel *keep*,
Give ear *in time of need;*
Who leadest like a flock of sheep
Thy loved Joseph's seed;

That sitt'st between the Cherubs *bright*,
Between their wings outspread;
Shine forth, *and from thy cloud give light*,
And on our foes thy dread.

2 In Ephraim's view and Benjamin's,
And in Manasse's sight,
Awake thy strength, come, and *be seen*
To save us *by thy might.*

3 Turn us again; *thy grace divine*
To us, O God, *vouchsafe;*
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

4 Lord God of Hosts! how long wilt thou,
How long wilt thou declare
Thy smoking wrath, *and angry brow*
Against thy people's prayer!

5 Thou feed'st them with the bread of tears;
Their bread with tears they eat;
And mak'st them largely drink the tears
Wherewith their cheeks are wet.

6 A strife thou mak'st us *and a prey*
To every neighbour foe;
Among themselves they laugh, they play,
And flouts at us they throw.

7 Return us, *and thy grace divine,*
O God of Hosts! *vouchsafe;*
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

8 A vine from Egypt thou hast brought,
Thy free love made it thine,
And drov'st out nations, *proud and haught,*
To plant this *lovely* vine.

9 Thou didst prepare for it a place,
And root it deep and fast,
That it *began to grow apace,*
And filled the land *at last.*

10 With her *green* shade that covered *all,*
The hills were *over-spread;*
Her boughs as *high as* cedars tall
Advanced their lofty head.

11 Her branches *on the western side*
Down to the sea she sent,
And *upward* to that river *wide*
Her other branches *went.*

12 Why hast thou laid her hedges low,
And broken down her fence,
That all may pluck her, as they go,
With rudest violence?

13 The *tusked* boar out of the wood
Up turns it by the roots;
Wild beasts there browse, and make their food
Her grapes and tender shoots.

14 Return now, God of Hosts! look down
From Heaven, thy seat divine;
Behold *us, but without a frown,*
And visit this *thy* vine.

15 Visit this vine, which thy right hand
Hath set, and planted *long,*
And the young branch, that for thyself
Thou hast made firm and strong.

16 But now it is consumed with fire,
And cut *with axes* down;
They perish at thy dreadful ire,
At thy rebuke and frown.

17 Upon the man of thy right hand
Let thy *good* hand be *laid;*
Upon the son of man, whom thou
Strong for thyself hast made.

18 So shall we not go back from thee
To ways of sin and shame;
Quicken us thou; then *gladly* we
Shall call upon thy Name.

19 Return us, *and thy grace divine,*
Lord God of Hosts! *vouchsafe;*
Cause thou thy face upon us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

PSALM LXXXI.

1 To God our strength sing loud, *and clear,*
Sing loud to God *our King;*
To Jacob's God, *that all may hear,*
Loud acclamations ring.

2 Prepare a hymn, prepare a song,
The timbrel hither bring;
The *cheerful* psaltery bring along,
And harp *with* pleasant *string.*

3 Blow, *as is wont,* in the new moon,
With trumpets' *lofty sound,*
The appointed time, the day whereon
Our solemn feast *comes round.*

4 This was a statute *given of old,*
For Israel *to observe;*
A law of Jacob's God, *to hold,*
From whence they might not swerve

5 This is a testimony ordained
In Joseph, *not to change;*
When as he passed through Egypt land:
The tongue I heard was strange.

6 From burden, *and from slavish toil,*
I set his shoulder free:
His hands from pots, *and miry soil,*
Delivered were *by me.*

7 When trouble did thee sore assail,
On me then didst thou call;
And I to free thee *did not fail,*
And let thee out of thrall.

I answered thee in thunder deep,
With clouds encompassed round;
I tried thee at the water *steep,*
Of Meriba *renown'd.*

8 Hear, O my people, *hearken well;*
I testify to thee,
Thou ancient stock of Israel,
If you wilt list to me:

9 Throughout the land of thy abode
No alien god shall be,
Nor shalt thou to a foreign god
In honour bend thy knee.

10 I am the Lord thy God, which brought
Thee out of Egypt land;
Ask large enough, and I, *besought*,
Will grant thy full demand.

11 And yet my people would not *hear*,
Nor hearken to my voice;
And Israel, *whom I loved so dear*,
Misliked me for his choice.

12 Then did I leave them to their will,
And to their wandering mind;
Their own conceits they followed still,
Their own devices blind.

13 O, that my people would *be wise*,
To serve me *all their days!*
And O, that Israel would *advise*
To walk my *righteous* ways!

14 Then would I soon bring down their foes,
That now so proudly rise;
And turn my hand against *all those*,
That are their enemies.

15 Who hate the Lord should *then be fain*
To bow to him and bend;
But *they, his people, should remain*,
Their time should have no end.

16 And he would feed them *from the shock*
With flower of finest wheat,
And satisfy them from the rock
With honey *for their meat.*

PSALM LXXXII.

1 God in great assembly stands
Of kings and lordly states;
Among the gods, on both his hands,
He judges and debates.

2 How long will ye pervert the right
With judgment false and wrong,
Favouring the wicked *by your might*,
Who thence grow bold and strong?

3 Regard the weak and fatherless,
Despatch the poor man's cause;
And raise the man in deep distress
By just and equal laws.

4 Defend the poor and desolate,
And rescue from the hands
Of wicked men the low estate
Of him *that help demands.*

5 They know not, nor will understand,
In darkness they walk on;
The earth's foundations all are moved,
And out of order gone.

6 I said that ye were gods; yea, all
The sons of God Most High;
7 But ye shall die like men, and fall
As other princes *die.*

8 Rise, God; judge thou the earth *in might*,
This *wicked* earth redress;
For thou art he who shall by right
The nations all possess.

PSALM LXXXIII.

1 Be not thou silent *now at length*,
O God! hold not thy peace;
Sit thou not still; O God of *strength*,
Why cry, and do not cease.

2 For lo, thy *furious* foes *now* swell,
And storm outrageously;
And they that hate thee, *proud and fell*,
Exalt their heads full high.

3 Against thy people they contrive
Their plots and counsels deep;
Them to ensnare they chiefly strive
Whom thou dost hide and keep.

4 Come, let us cut them off, say they,
Till they no nation be;
That Israel's name for ever may
Be lost in memory.

5 For they consult with all their might,
And all, as one in mind,
Themselves against thee they unite,
And in firm union bind.

6 The tents of Edom, and the brood
Of *scornful* Ishmael,
Moab, with them of Hagar's blood,
That in the desert dwell;

7 Gebal and Ammon *there conspire*,
And *hateful* Amalec,
The Philistines, and they of Tyre,
Whose bounds the sea doth check;

8 With them *great* Ashur also bands,
And doth confirm the knot:
All these have lent their armed hands
To aid the sons of Lot.

9 Do to them as to Midian *bold*,
That wasted all the coast;
To Sisera; and, as *is told*,
Thou did'st to Jabin's *host*,

10 *When*, at the brook of Kishon *old*,
They were repulsed and slain,
At Endor quite cut off, and rolled
As dung upon the plain.

11 As Zeb and Oreb evil sped,
So let their princes speed;
As Zeba and Zalmunna *bled*,
So let their princes *bleed*.

12 *For they amidst their pride* have said,
By right now shall we seize
God's houses, and *will now invade*
Their stately palaces.

13 My God! O make them as a wheel,
No quiet let them find;
Giddy and *restless* let *them reel*
Like stubble from the wind.

14 As *when* an *aged* wood takes fire,
Which on a sudden strays,
The *greedy* flame runs higher and higher,
Till all the mountains blaze;

15 So with thy whirlwind them pursue,
And with thy tempest chase;
And, till they yield thee honour due,
Lord! fill with shame their face.

16 Ashamed and troubled, let them be,
Troubled and shamed for ever;
Ever confounded, and so die
With shame, *and 'scape it never*.

17 Then shall they know that Thou, whose name
Jehovah is alone,
Art the Most High, *and Thou the same*
O'er all the earth *art One!*

PSALM LXXXIV.

1 How lovely are thy dwellings fair!
O Lord of Hosts, how dear
The *pleasant* tabernacles are,
Where thou dost dwell so near!

2 My soul doth long, and almost die,
Thy courts, O Lord, to see;
My heart and flesh aloud do cry,
O living God! for thee.

3 There ev'n the sparrow, *freed from wrong*,
Hath found a house of *rest*;
The swallow there, to lay her young,
Hath built her *brooding* nest;

Ev'n by thy altars, Lord of Hosts,
They find their safe abode;
And home they fly from round the coasts,
Tow'rd thee, my King, my God!

4 Happy, who in thy house reside,
Where thee they ever praise!

5 Happy, whose strength in thee doth 'bide,
And in their hearts thy ways!

6 They pass through Baca's *thirsty* vale,
That dry and barren ground;
As through a fruitful watery dale,
Where springs and showers abound.

7 They journey on from strength to strength
With joy and gladsome cheer,
Till all before *our* God *at length*
In Sion do appear.

8 Lord God of Hosts! hear *now* my prayer,
O Jacob's God! give ear:
9 Thou God, our shield, look on the face
Of thy anointed *dear*.

10 For one day in thy courts *to be*,
Is better, *and more blessed*,
Than *in the joys of vanity*
A thousand days *at best*.

I, in the temple of my God,
Had rather keep a door,
Than dwell in tents, *and rich abode*,
With sin *for evermore*.

11 For God the Lord, both sun and shield,
Gives grace and glory *bright*;
No good from them shall be withheld,
Whose ways are just and right.

12 Lord *God* of Hosts! *that reign'st on high*
That man is *truly* blessed,
Who *only* on thee doth rely,
And in thee only rest.

PSALM LXXXV.

1 Thy land to favour graciously
Thou hast not, Lord, been slack;
Thou hast from *hard* captivity
Returned Jacob back.

2 The iniquity thou did'st forgive
That wrought thy people wo;
And all their sin, *that did thee grieve*,
Hast hid *where none shall know*.

3 Thine anger all thou had'st removed,
And *calmly* did'st return
From thy fierce wrath, which we had proved
Far worse than fire to burn.

4 God of our saving health and peace!
Turn us, and us restore;
Thine indignation cause to cease
Toward us, *and chide no more*.

5 Wilt thou be angry without end,
For ever angry thus?
Wilt thou thy frowning ire extend,
From age to age on us?

6 Wilt thou not turn and *hear our voice*,
And us again revive,
That so thy people may rejoice,
By thee preserved alive?

7 Cause us to see thy goodness, Lord,
To us thy mercy show;
Thy saving health to us afford,
And life in us renew.

8 *And now*, what God the Lord will speak
I will *go straight and* hear,
For to his people he speaks peace,
And to his saints *full dear.*

To his dear saints he will speak peace;
But let them never more
Return to folly, *but surcease*
To trespass as before.

9 Surely, to such as do him fear
Salvation is at hand;
And glory shall *ere long appear*
To dwell within our land.

10 Mercy and truth, *that long were missed*,
Now *joyfully* are met;
Sweet Peace and Righteousness have kissed,
And hand in hand are set

11 Truth from the earth, *like to a flower*,
Shall bud and blossom *then;*
And Justice, from her heavenly bower,
Look down *on mortal men.*

12 The Lord will also then bestow
Whatever thing is good;
Our land shall forth in plenty throw
Her fruits *to be our food.*

13 Before him Righteousness shall go,
His royal harbinger.
Then will he come, and not be slow;
His footsteps can not err.

PSALM LXXXVI.

1 Thy *gracious* ear, O Lord! incline,
O hear me, *I thee pray;*
For I am poor, and almost pine
With need, *and sad decay.*

2 Preserve my soul; for I have trod
Thy ways, and love the just;
Save thou thy servant, O my God!
Who *still* in thee doth trust.

3 Pity me, Lord, for daily thee
4 I call; O make rejoice
Thy servant's soul; for, Lord, to thee
I lift my soul *and voice.*

5 For thou art good, thou, Lord! art prone
To pardon, thou to all
Art full of mercy, thou *alone*
To them that on thee call.

6 Unto my supplication, Lord,
Give ear, and to the cry
Of my *incessant* prayers afford
Thy hearing graciously.

7 I, in the day of my distress,
Will call on thee *for aid;*
For thou wilt *grant* me *free access*,
And answer *what I prayed.*

8 Like thee among the gods is none,
O Lord; nor any works
Of all that other gods have done
Like to thy *glorious* works.

9 The nations all whom thou hast made
Shall come, *and all shall frame*
To bow them low before thee, Lord,
And glorify thy name.

10 For great thou art, and wonders great
By thy strong hand are done;
Thou, *in thy everlasting seat*,
Remainest God alone.

11 Teach me, O Lord, thy way *most right*
I in thy truth will bide;
To fear thy name, my heart unite,
So shall it never slide.

12 Thee will I praise, O Lord my God!
Thee honour and adore
With my whole heart, and blaze abroad
Thy Name for Evermore.

13 For great thy mercy is tow'rd me,
And thou hast freed my soul,
Even from the lowest hell set free,
From deepest darkness foul.

14 O God, the proud against me rise,
And violent men are met
To seek my life, and in their eyes
No fear of thee have set.

15 But thou, Lord, art the God most mild,
Readiest thy grace to show,
Slow to be angry, and *art styl'd*
Most merciful, most true.

16 O, turn to me *thy face at length*,
And me have mercy on;
Unto thy servant give thy strength,
And save thy handmaid's son.

17 Some sign of good to me afford,
And let my foes *then* see,
And be asham'd: because thou, Lord,
Dost help and comfort me.

PSALM LXXXVII.

1 Among the holy mountains *high*
Is his foundation fast;
There seated in his sanctuary,
His temple there is plac'd.

2 Sion's *fair* gates the Lord loves more
Than all the dwellings *fair*
Of Jacob's *land, though there be store,*
And all within his care.

3 City of God, most glorious things
Of thee *abroad* are spoke;
4 I mention Egypt, *where proud kings*
Did our forefathers yoke:

I mention Babel to my friends
Philistia *full of scorn;*
And Tyre with Ethiops' *utmost ends,*
Lo this man there was born:

5 But *twice that praise shall in our ear*
Be said of Sion *last;*
This and this man was born in her;
High God shall fix her fast.

6 The Lord shall write it in a scroll
That ne'er shall be outworn,
When he the nations doth enrol,
That this man there was born.

7 Both they who sing, and they who dance,
With sacred songs are there;
In thee *fresh brooks, and soft streams glance,*
And all my fountains *clear.*

PSALM LXXXVIII.

1 Lord God! that dost me save and keep,
All day to thee I cry;
And all night long before thee weep,
Before thee *prostrate lie.*

2 Into thy presence let my prayer
With sighs devout ascend;
And to my cries, that *ceaseless are,*
Thine ear with favour bend.

3 For, cloy'd with woes and trouble sore,
Surcharg'd my soul doth lie;
My life, *at Death's uncheerful door,*
Unto the grave draws nigh.

4 Reckon'd I am with them that pass
Down to the *dismal* pit;
I am a man, but weak, alas!
And for that name unfit.

5 From life discharg'd and parted quite
Among the dead to *sleep;*
And like the slain in *bloody fight,*
That in the grave lie *deep.*

Whom thou rememberest no more,
Dost never more regard,
Them, from thy hand deliver'd o'er,
Death's hideous house hath barr'd.

6 Thou in the lowest pit *profound*
Hast set me *all forlorn,*
Where thickest darkness *hovers round,*
In horrid deeps *to mourn.*

7 Thy wrath, *from which no shelter saves*
Full sore doth press on me;
Thou break'st upon me all thy waves,
And all thy waves break me.

8 Thou dost my friends from me estrange,
And mak'st me odious,
Me to them odious, *for they change,*
And I here pent up thus.

9 Through sorrow and affliction great,
Mine eye grows dim and dead;
Lord! all the day I thee entreat,
My hands to thee I spread.

10 Wilt thou do wonders on the dead?
Shall the deceas'd arise,
And praise thee *from their loathsome bed*
With pale and hollow eyes?

11 Shall they thy loving kindness tell,
On whom the grave *hath hold?*
Or they, who in perdition *dwell,*
Thy faithfulness *unfold?*

12 In darkness can thy mighty *hand*
Or wondrous acts be known?
Thy justice in the *gloomy* land
Of *dark* oblivion?

13 But I to thee, O Lord! do cry,
Ere yet my life be spent;
And *up to thee* my prayer *doth hie*
Each morn, and thee prevent.

14 Why wilt thou, Lord, my soul forsake,
And hide thy face from me,
15 That am already bruis'd, and shake
With terror sent from thee?

Bruis'd and afflicted, and *so low*
As ready to expire;
While I thy terrors undergo,
Astonish'd with thine ire.

16 Thy fierce wrath over me doth flow;
Thy threatenings cut me through:
17 All day they round about me go,
Like waves they me pursue.

18 Lover and friend thou hast remov'd,
And sever'd from me far:
They *fly me now* whom I have lov'd,
And as in darkness are.

A PARAPHRASE ON PSALM CXIV.

This and the following Psalm were done by the Author at fifteen years old.

When the bless'd seed of Terah's faithful son,
After long toil, their liberty had won;
And past from Pharian fields to Canaan land,
Led by the strength of the Almighty's hand;
Jehovah's wonders were in Israel shown,
His praise and glory was in Israel known:
That saw the troubled Sea, and shivering fled,
And sought to hide his froth-becurled head
Low in the earth; Jordan's clear streams recoil,
As a faint host that hath receiv'd the foil.
The high huge-bellied mountains skip, like rams
Amongst their ewes; the little hills, like lambs.
Why fled the ocean? and why skipt the mountains?
Why turned Jordan tow'rd his crystal fountains?
Shake, Earth; and at the presence be aghast
Of him that ever was, and aye shall last;
That glassy floods from rugged rocks can crush,
And make soft rills from fiery flint-stones gush.

PSALM CXXXVI.

Let us, with a gladsome mind,
Praise the Lord, for he is kind;
For his mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.
Let us blaze his name abroad,
For of gods he is the God.
For his, &c.
O, let us his praises tell,
Who doth the wrathful tyrants quell,
For his, &c.
Who with his miracles, doth make
Amazed Heaven and Earth to shake.
For his, &c.
Who, by his wisdom, did create
The painted heavens so full of state.
For his, &c.
Who did the solid earth ordain
To rise above the watery plain.
For his, &c.
Who, by his all-commanding might,
Did fill the new-made world with light.
For his, &c.
And caus'd the golden-tressed sun
All the day long his course to run.
For his, &c.
The horned moon to shine by night,
Amongst her spangled sisters bright.
For his, &c.
He, with his thunder-clasping hand,
Smote the first-born of Egypt land.
For his, &c.
And, in despite of Pharaoh fell,
He brought from thence his Israël,
For his, &c.
The ruddy waves he cleft in twain
Of the Erythræan main.
For his, &c.
The floods stood still, like walls of glass,
While the Hebrew bands did pass.
For his, &c.
But full soon they did devour
The tawny king with all his power.
For his, &c.
His chosen people he did bless
In the wasteful wilderness.
For his, &c.
In bloody battle he brought down
Kings of prowess and renown.
For his, &c.
He foil'd bold Seon and his host,
That rul'd the Amorrëan coast.
For his, &c.
And large-limb'd Og he did subdue,
With all his over-hardy crew.
For his, &c.
And, to his servant Israël,
He gave their land therein to dwell.
For his, &c.
He hath, with a piteous eye,
Beheld us in our misery.
For his, &c.
And freed us from the slavery
Of the invading enemy.
For his, &c.
All living creatures he doth feed,
And with full hand supplies their need.
For his, &c.
Let us therefore warble forth
His mighty majesty and worth.
For his, &c.
That his mansion hath on high
Above the reach of mortal eye.
For his mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

DR. EDWARD YOUNG.

Contents.

Page.

Life of the Author, ... iii

THE COMPLAINT; or, NIGHT-THOUGHTS.

Night I. On Life, Death, and Immortality, . . 1
Night II. On Time, Death, and Friendship, . 5
Night III. Narcissa, ... 11
Night IV. The Christian Triumph, ... 16
Night V. The Relapse, ... 24
Night VI. The Infidel Reclaimed. Part I, . 33
Night VII. The Infidel Reclaimed. Part II, . 41
Night VIII. Virtue's Apology; or, The Man of the World answered, ... 55

THE CONSOLATION.

Night IX, and Last, containing, among other things,—1. A Moral Survey of the Nocturnal Heavens.—2. A Night-address to the Deity, . 68

THE LAST DAY, A POEM: in three Books.

Dedication to the Queen, ... 90
Book I, ... 91
Book II, ... 94
Book III, ... 97

THE FORCE OF RELIGION: in two Books.

Book I, ... 100
Book II, ... 103

LOVE OF FAME: in seven characteristical Satires.

Preface, ... 106
Satire I.—To his grace the Duke of Dorset, . . 107
Satire II, ... 110
Satire III.—To the Right Hon. Mr. Dodington, . 112
Satire IV.—To the Rt. Hon. Sir Spencer Compton, 115
Satire V.—On Women, ... 117
Satire VI.—On Women. Inscribed to the Right Hon. Lady Elizabeth Germain, ... 123
Satire VII.—To the Right Hon. Sir Robert Walpole, ... 129

Page.

EPISTLES.

Epistles to Mr. Pope, concerning the Authors of the Age, Epistle I, ... 130
Epistle II, from Oxford, ... 133
An Epistle to the Right Hon. George Lord Lansdowne, ... 135
Letter to Mr. Tickell, ... 140

ODES.

To the King, ... 142
Ocean, ... 144
Sea-Piece. Dedication to Mr. Voltaire, . . 148
Ode the first, ... ib.
Ode the second, ... 149
Imperium Pelagi, a Naval Lyric, ... 150
The Merchant. Prelude, ... 151
Strain I, ... ib.
Strain II, ... 153
Strain III, ... 155
Strain IV, ... 157
Strain V, ... 158
The Moral, ... 160
The Close, ... 161

A Paraphrase on part of the Book of Job, . . . 162
Resignation. Part I, ... 167
Part II, ... 174
Postscript, ... 182

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES.

On the Death of Queen Anne, and the Accession of King George, ... 183
Verses occasioned by that famous piece of the Crucifixion, done by Michael Angelo, . . 185
An historical Epilogue to the Brothers, . . ib.
Epitaph on Lord Aubrey Beauclerk, . . ib.
To Mr. Addison, on the Tragedy of Cato, . . 186
Epitaph, at Welwyn, Hertfordshire, . . ib.

DRAMATIC.

The Revenge, a Tragedy, ... 186

The Life of Dr. Edward Young.

Dr. Young's father, whose name was also Edward, was Fellow of Winchester College, Rector of Upham in Hampshire, and in the latter part of his life, Dean of Sarum; chaplain to William and Mary, and afterwards to queen Ann. Jacob tells us that the latter, when Princess Royal, did him the honour to stand godmother to our poet; and that, upon her ascending the throne, he was appointed Clerk of the Closet to her Majesty.

It does not appear that this gentleman distinguished himself in the Republic of Letters, otherwise than by a Latin Visitation Sermon, preached in 1686, and by two volumes of Sermons, printed in 1702, and which he dedicated to Lord Bradford, through whose interest he probably received some of his promotions. The Dean died at Sarum in 1705, aged 63; after a very short illness, as appears by the exordium of Bishop Burnet's sermon at the Cathedral on the following Sunday. "Death (said he) has been of late walking round us, and making breach upon us, and has now carried away the head of this body with a stroke; so that he, whom you saw *a week ago* distributing the holy mysteries, is now laid in the dust. But he still lives in the many excellent directions he has left us, both how to live and how to die."

Our author, who was an only son, was born at his father's rectory, in 1681, and received the first part of his education (as his father had formerly done) at Winchester College; from whence, in his nineteenth year, he was placed on the foundation of New College, Oxford; whence again, on the death of the Warden in the same year, he was removed to Corpus Christi. In 1708, Archbishop Tennison nominated him to a law fellowship at All Souls, where, in 1744, he took the degree of Bachelor of Civil Law, and five years afterward that of Doctor.

Between the acquisition of these academic honours, Young was appointed to speak the Latin Oration on the foundation of the Codrington Library; which he afterwards printed, with a dedication to the ladies of that family, in English.

In this part of his life, our author is said not to have been that ornament to virtue and religion which he afterwards became. This is easy to be accounted for. He had been released from parental authority by his father's death; and his genius and conversation had introduced him to the notice of the witty and profligate Duke of Wharton,* and his gay companions, by whom his finances might be improved, but not his morals. This is the period at which Pope is said to have told Warburton, our young author had "much genius without common sense:" and it should seem likewise that he possessed a zeal for religion with little of its practical influence; for, with all his gaiety and ambition, he was an advocate for Revelation and Christianity. Thus when Tindel, the atheistical philosopher, used to spend much of his time at All Souls, he complained: "The other boys I can always answer, because I know whence they have their arguments, which I have read an hundred times; but that fellow Young is continually pestering me with something of his own."

This apparent inconsistency is rendered the more striking from the different kinds of composition in which, at this period, he was engaged: viz. a political panegyric on the new Lord Lansdowne, and a sacred Poem on the Last Day, which was written in 1710, but not published till 1713. It was dedicated to the Queen, and acknowledges an obligation, which has been differently understood, either as referring to her having been his godmother, or his patron; for it is inferred from a couplet of Swift's, that Young was a pensioned advocate of government:

> "Whence Gay was banished in disgrace,
> Where Pope will never show his face,
> Where Y—— must torture his invention,
> To flatter knaves, or lose his pension."

This, however, might be mere report, at this period, since Swift was not over-nice in his authorities, and nothing is more common than to suppose the advocate, and the flatterer of the great, an hireling. Flattery seems indeed to have been our poet's besetting sin through life; but if interest was his object, he must have been frequently disappointed; and to those disappointments we probably owe some of his best reflections on human life.

Of his Last Day, (his first considerable performance) Dr. Johnson observes, that it "has an equability and propriety which he afterwards either

* At the instigation of this peer he was once candidate for a seat in Parliament, but without success, and the expences were paid by Wharton.

never endeavoured for, or never attained. Many paragraphs are noble, and few are mean; yet the whole is languid: the plan is too much extended, and a succession of images divides and weakens the general conception. But the great reason why the reader is disappointed is, that the thought of The Last Day makes every man more than poetical, by spreading over his mind a general obscurity of sacred horror, that oppresses distinction and disdains expression." The subject is indeed truly awful, and was peculiarly affecting to this celebrated critic, who never could, without trembling, meditate upon death, or the eternal world. The poet's theological system, moreover, was not, at least when he wrote this, the most consistent and evangelical: I mean he had not those views of the Christian atonement, and of pardoning grace, which give such a glory to his Night Thoughts, and would much more have illumined this composition. All the preparation he seems to have there in view, is

> By tears and groans, and never-ceasing care,
> "And all the pious violence of prayer,"

to fit himself for the Tribunal. Moreover, the project of future misery is too awful for poetic enlargement, and makes the piece too terrible to be read with pleasure; while the attempt to *particularize* the solemnities of judgment, lowers their sublimity, and makes some parts of the description, as Dr. Johnson has observed, appear mean, and even bordering on burlesque. This poem, however, was well received upon the whole, and the better for being written by a layman, and it was commended by the ministry and their party, because the dedication flattered their mistress and her government—far too much, indeed, for the nature of the subject.

Dr. Young's next poem was entitled, the Force of Religion, and founded on the deaths of Lady Jane Grey and her husband. "It is written with elegance enough," according to Dr. Johnson; but was "never popular:" for "Jane is too heroic to be pitied." The dedication of this piece to the countess of Salisbury was also *inexcusably* fulsome, and, I think, profane. Indeed, the author himself seems afterwards to have thought so; for when he collected his smaller pieces into volumes, he very judiciously suppressed this and most of his other dedications.

In some part of his life, Young certainly went to Ireland,* and was there acquainted with the eccentrical Dean Swift; and his biographers seem agreed, that this was, most probably, during his connexion with the Duke of Wharton, who went thither in 1717. But he can not have long remained there, as in 1719, he brought out his first tragedy of Busiris, at Drury Lane, and dedicated it to the Duke of Newcastle. This tragedy had been written some years, though now first performed; for it is to our author's credit, that many of his works were laid by him a considerable time before they were offered to the public. Our great dramatic critic pronounces this piece "too far removed from known life," to affect the passions.

His next performance was The Revenge, the the dramatic character of which is sufficiently ascertained by its still keeping possession of the stage. The hint of this is supposed to have been taken from Othello; "but the reflections, the incidents, and the diction, are original." The success of this induced him to attempt another tragedy, which was written in 1721, but not brought upon the stage for thirty years afterwards; and then without success, as we shall have farther occasion to observe. It has been remarked, that all his plays conclude with suicide,* and I much fear the frequent introduction of this unnatural crime upon the stage, has contributed greatly to its commission.

We have passed over our Author's Paraphrase on Part of the Book of Job, in order to bring his dramatic performances together. The Paraphrase has been well received, and has often been printed with his Night Thoughts. This would be admired, perhaps, as much as any of his works, could we forget the original; but there is such a dignified simplicity even in our prose translation of the poetic parts of scripture, that we can seldom bear to see them reduced to rhyme, or modern measures.

His next, and one of his best performances, is entitled The Love of Fame the Universal Passion, in seven characteristic Satires, originally published separately, between the years 1725 and 1728. This, according to Dr. Johnson, is a "*very great* performance. It is said to be a series of epigrams, and if it be, it is what the author intended: his endeavour was at the production of striking distichs, and pointed sentences; and his distichs have the weight of solid sentiment, and his points the sharpness of resistless truth. His characters are often selected with discernment, and drawn with nicety; his illustrations are often happy, and his reflections often just. His species of Satire is between those of Horace and Juvenal: he has the gaiety of Horace without his laxity of numbers; and the morality of Juvenal, with greater variety of images." Swift, indeed, has pronounced of these Satires, that they should have been either "more merry, or more severe:" in that case, they

* From his seventh Satire it appears also, that he was once abroad, probably about this time, and saw a field of battle covered with the slain; and it is affirmed that once, with a classic in his hand, he wandered into the enemy's encampment, and had some difficulty to convince them, that he was only an *absent poet*, and not a *spy*.

* Our author seems early to have been enamoured with the Tragic Muse, and with the charms of melancholy. Dr. Ridley relates, that, when at Oxford, he would sometimes shut up his room, and study by a lamp at mid-day

might probably have caught the popular taste more; but this does not prove that they would have been better. The opinion of the Duke of Grafton, however, was of more worth than all the opinions of the wits, if it be true as related by Mr. Spence, that his grace presented the author with two thousand pounds. "Two thousand pounds for a poem!" said one of the Duke's friends: to whom his grace replied, that he had made an excellent bargain, for he thought it worth four.

On the accession of George I., Young flattered him with an Ode, called Ocean, to which was prefixed an introductory Ode to the King, and an essay on Lyric Poetry: of these the most observable thing is, that the poet and the critic could not agree: for the Rules of the Essay condemned the Poetry, and the Poetry set at defiance the maxims of the Essay. The biographer of British Poets has truly said, "he had least success in his lyric attempts, in which he seems to have been under some malignant influence: he is always labouring to be great, and at last is only turgid."

We now leave awhile the works of our author, to contemplate the conduct of the man. About this time his studies took a more serious turn; and, forsaking the law, which he had never practised, when he was almost fifty, he entered into orders, and was, in 1728, appointed Chaplain to the King. One of Pope's biographers relates, that, on this occasion Young applied to his brother poet for direction in his studies, who jocosely recommended Thomas Aquinas, which the former taking seriously, he retired to the suburbs with the angelic doctor, till his friend discovered him, and brought him back.

His Vindication of Providence, and Estimate of Human Life, were published in this year; they have gone through several editions, and are generally regarded as the best of his prose compositions: but the plan of the latter never was completed. The following year he printed a very loyal sermon on King Charles' Martyrdom, entitled, An Apology for Princes. In 1730, he was presented by his college to the rectory of Welwyn, in Hertfordshire, worth about 300*l.* a year, beside the lordship of the manor annexed to it. This year he relapsed again to poetry, and published a loyal Naval Ode, and Two Epistles to Pope, of which nothing particular need be said.

He was married, in 1731, to Lady Elizabeth Lee, widow of Colonel Lee, and daughter to the Earl of Litchfield; and it was not long before she brought him a son and heir.

Sometime before his marriage, the Doctor walking in his garden at Welwyn, with his lady and another, a servant came to tell him a gentleman wished to speak to him. "Tell him," said the Doctor, "I am too happily engaged to change my situation." The ladies insisted that he should go, as his visiter was a man of rank, his patron, and his friend; and as persuasion had no effect on him, they took him, one by the right hand, and the other by the left, and led him to the garden-gate. He then laid his hand upon his heart, and in the expressive manner, for which he was so remarkable, uttered the following lines:

"Thus Adam look'd when from the garden driven,
And thus disputed orders sent from Heav'n;
Like him I go, but yet to go am loth:
Like him I go, for angels drove us both.
Hard was his fate, but mine still more unkind:
His Eve went with him, but mine stays behind."

Another striking instance of his wit is related in reference to Voltaire: who, while in England, (probably at Mr. Doddington's seat in Dorsetshire,) ridiculed, with some severity, Milton's allegorical personages, *Sin* and *Death*; on which Young, who was one of the company, immediately addressed him in the following extemporaneous distich:

"Thou art so witty, profligate, and thin,
Thou seem'st a Milton, with his *Death* and *Sin*."

Soon after his marriage, our author again indulged his poetical vein in two odes, called The Sea Peace, with a poetical Dedication to Voltaire in which the above incident seems alluded to in these lines,

"On Dorset downs, when Milton's page
With *Sin* and *Death* provok'd thy rage."

In 1734 he printed an Argument for Peace, which afterward, with several of his smaller pieces, and most of his dedications, was consigned by his own hand to merited oblivion: in which circumstance he deserves both the thanks and imitation of posterity.

About the year 1741 he had the unhappiness to lose his wife; her daughter by Colonel Lee, and this daughter's husband, Mr. Temple. What affliction he felt for their loss, may be seen in his Night Thoughts, written on this occasion. They are addressed to Lorenzo, a man of pleasure, and of the world; and who, it is generally supposed, was his own son, then labouring under his father's displeasure. His son-in-law is said to be characterized by Philander, and his lady's daughter was certainly the person he speaks of under the appellation of Narcissa.—(See Night III.) In her last illness, which was a consumption, he accompanied her to Montpellier, or, as Mr. Croft says, to Lyons, in the south of France, at which place she died soon after her arrival.

Being regarded as an heretic, she was denied christian burial, and her afflicted father was obliged to steal a grave, and inter her privately with his own hands;* (See Night III.) In this celebrated poem he thus addresses Death:

* I take the liberty of inserting here a passage from a letter written by Mr. W. Taylor, from Montpellier, to his sister

"Insatiate archer! could not one suffice?
Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain;
And thrice, ere thrice yon moon had filled her horn."

These lines have been universally understood of the above deaths; but this supposition can no way be reconciled with Mr. Croft's dates, who says, Mrs. Temple died in 1736, Mr. Temple in 1740, and Lady Young in 1741. Which quite inverts the order of the poet, who makes Narcissa's death follow Philander's:

"Narcissa follows e'er his tomb is closed."
Night III.

There is no possible way to reconcile these contradictions: either we must reject Mr. Croft's dates, for which he gives us no authority, or we must suppose the characters and incidents, if not entirely fictitious, as the author assures us that they are not, were accommodated by poetic licence to his purpose. As to the character of Lorenzo, whether taken from real life, or moulded purely in the author's imagination, Mr. Croft has sufficiently proved that it could not intend his son, who was but eight years old when the greater part of the Night Thoughts was written; for Night Seventh is dated, in the original edition, July 1744.

For the literary merits of this work we shall again refer to the criticism of Dr. Johnson, which is seldom exceptionable, when he is not warped by political prejudices. "In his Night Thoughts," says the Doctor, speaking of our author, "he has exhibited a very wide display of original poetry, variegated with deep reflections and striking allusions; a wilderness of thought, in which the fertility of fancy scatters flowers of every hue, and of every odour. This is one of the few poems in which blank verse could not be changed for rhyme, but with disadvantage. The wild diffusion of the sentiments and the digressive sallies of imagination, would have been compressed and restrained by confinement to rhyme. The excellence of this work is not exactness, but copiousness: particular lines are not to be regarded; the power is in the whole; and in the whole there is a magnificence like that ascribed to Chinese plantations, the magnificence of vast extent and endless diversity."

So far Dr. Johnson.—Mr. Croft says, "Of these poems the two or three first have been perused more eagerly and more frequently than the rest. When he got as far as the fourth or fifth, his original motive for taking up the pen was answered: his grief was naturally either diminished or exhausted. We still find the same pious poet; but we hear less of Philander and Narcissa, and less of the mourner whom he loved to pity."

Notwithstanding one might be tempted, from some passages in the Night Thoughts, to suppose he had taken his leave of terrestrial things, in the alarming year 1745, he could not refrain from returning again to politics, but wrote Poetical Reflections on the State of the Kingdom, originally appended to the Night Thoughts, but never reprinted with them.

In 1753, his tragedy of The Brothers, written thirty years before, now first appeared upon the stage. It had been in rehearsal when Young took orders, and was withdrawn on that occasion. The Rector of Welwyn devoted 1000*l.* to "The Society for the propagation of the Gospel," and estimating the probable produce of this play at such a sum, he perhaps thought the occasion might sanctify the means; and not thinking so unfavourably of the stage as other good men have done, he committed the monstrous absurdity of giving a play for the propagation of the gospel! The author was, (as is often the case with authors) deceived in his calculation. The Brothers was never a favourite with the public: but that the society might not suffer, the doctor made up the deficiency from his own pocket.

His next was a prose performance, entitled, "The Centaur not fabulous; in Six letters to a Friend on the Life in Vogue." The third of these

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Mrs. Mouncher, in the preceding year 1789, which may be considered as curious, and will be interesting and affecting to the admirers of Dr. Young and his Narcissa:

"I know you, as well as myself, are not a little partial to Dr. Young. Had you been with me in a solitary walk the other day, you would have shed a tear over the remains of his dear Narcissa. I was walking in a place called the King's Garden; and there I saw the spot where she was interred. Mr. J——, Mrs. H——, and myself, had some conversation with the gardener respecting it; who told us, that about 45 years ago, Dr. Young was here with his daughter for her health; that he used constantly to be walking backward and forward in this garden (no doubt as he saw her gradually declining, to find the most solitary spot, where he might show his last token of affection, by leaving her remains as secure as possible from those savages, who would have denied her a christian burial: for at that time, an Englishman in this country was looked upon as an heretic, infidel, and devil. They begin now to verge from their bigotry, and allow them at least to be men, though not christians, I believe;) and that he bribed the under gardener, belonging to his father, to let him bury his daughter, which he did; pointed out the most solitary place, and dug the grave. The man, through a private door, admitted the Doctor at midnight, bringing his beloved daughter, wrapped up in a sheet, upon his shoulder: he laid her in the hole, sat down, and (as the man expressed it) '*rained tears!*' 'With pious sacrilege a grave I stole.' The man who was thus bribed is dead, but the master is still living. Before the man died, they were one day going to dig, and set some flowers, &c. in this spot where she was buried. The man said to his master, 'Don't dig there; for, so many years ago, I buried an English lady there.' The master was much surprised; and as Doctor Young's book had made much noise in France, it led him to inquire into the matter: and only two years ago it was known for a certainty that that was the place, and in this way: There was an English nobleman here, who was acquainted with the governor of this place; and wishing to ascertain the fact, he obtained permission to dig up the ground, where he found some bones, which were examined by a surgeon, and pronounced to be the remains of a human body: this, therefore, puts the authenticity of it beyond a doubt."—See Evan. Mag. for 1797, p. 444.

letters describes the death-bed of "the gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched Altamont," whom report supposed to be Lord Euston. But whether Altamont or Lorenzo were real or fictitious characters, it is certain the author could be at no loss for models for them among the gay nobility, with whom he was acquainted.

In 1759, appeared his lively "Conjectures on Original Composition;" which, according to Mr. Croft, appear "more like the production of untamed, unbridled youth, than of jaded fourscore." This letter contains the pleasing account of the death of Addison, and his dying address to Lord Warwick,—"See how a Christian can die!"

In 1762, but little before his death, Young published his last, and one of his least esteemed poems, "Resignation," which was written on the following occasion:—Observing that Mrs. Boscawen, in the midst of her grief for the loss of the admiral, derived consolation from a perusal of the Night Thoughts, her friend Mrs. Montague, proposed a visit to the author, by whom they were favourably received; and were pleased to confess that his "unbounded genius appeared to greater advantage in the companion than even in the author; that the Christian was in him a character still more inspired, more enraptured, more sublime than the poet, and that in his ordinary conversation,

——"Letting down the golden chain from high,
He drew his audience upward to the sky."

On this occasion, at the request of these ladies, the author produced his Resignation, above-mentioned, and which has been so unmercifully treated by the critics, but it has, in some measure, been rescued from their hands by Dr. Johnson, who says, "It was falsely represented as a proof of decayed faculties. There is Young in every stanza, such as he often was in his highest vigour."

We now approach the closing scene of our author's life of which, unhappily, we have few particulars. For three or four years before his death, he appears to have been incapacitated, by the infirmities of age for public duty; yet he perfectly enjoyed his intellects to the last, and even his vivacity; for in his last illness, a friend mentioning the recent decease of a person who had long been in a decline, and observing "that he was quite worn to a *shell* before he died;" "very likely," replied the doctor; "but what is become of the *kernel?*"—He is said to have regretted to another friend, that his Night Thoughts, of all his works most calculated to do good, were written so much above the understanding of common readers, as to contract their sphere of usefulness: This, however, ought not, perhaps to be regretted, since there is a great sufficiency of good books for common readers, and the style of that work will always introduce it where plainer compositions would not be read.

He died at the Parsonage House, at Welwyn, April 12, 1765, and was buried, according to his desire, by the side of his lady, under the altar-piece of that church, which is said to be ornamented in a singular manner with an elegant piece of needlework by Lady Young, and some appropriate inscriptions, painted by the direction of the doctor.

His best monument is to be found in his works; but a less durable one in marble was erected by his only son and heir, with a very modest and sensible inscription. This son, Mr. Frederick Young, had the first part of his education at Winchester school, and becoming a scholar upon the foundation, was sent, in consequence thereof, to New College, in Oxford; but there being no vacancy (though the society waited for one no less than two years) he was admitted in the mean time in Baliol, where he behaved so imprudently as to be forbidden the college.* This misconduct disobliged his father so much, that it is said he would never see him afterwards: however, by his will he bequeathed to him the bulk of his fortune, which was considerable, reserving only a legacy to his friend Stevens, the hatter at Temple-gate, and 1000*l.* to his house-keeper, with his dying charge to see all his manuscripts destroyed; which may have been some loss to posterity, though none, perhaps, to his own fame.

Dr. Young, as a christian and divine, has been reckoned an example of primeval piety. He was an able orator, but it is not known whether he composed many sermons, and it is certain that he published very few. The following incident does honour to his feelings: when preaching in his turn one Sunday at St. James's, finding he could not gain the attention of his audience, his pity for their folly got the better of all decorum; he sat back in the pulpit, and burst into a flood of tears.

His turn of mind was naturally solemn; and he usually when at home in the country, spent many hours walking among the tombs in his own church yard. His conversation, as well as writings, had all a reference to a future life; and this turn of mind mixed itself even with his improvements in gardening; he had, for instance, an alcove, with a bench so well painted in it, that at a distance it seemed to be real; but upon a nearer approach the deception was perceived, and this motto appeared:

INVISIBILIA NON DECIPIUNT.

The things unseen do not deceive us.

In another part of his garden was also this inscription:

* Mr. Croft denies this circumstance, and calls the poet's son his *friend*.—He does not, however, pretend to vindicate the conduct of the youth; but he relates his repentance and regret, which is far better. Perhaps it is not possible wholly to vindicate the father. Great genius, even accompanied with piety, is not always most ornamental to domestic life; and "the prose of ordinary occurrences," says Croft, "is beneath the dignity of poets."

AMBULANTES IN HORTO AUDIERUNT VOCEM DEI.

They heard the voice of God walking in the garden.

This seriousness occasioned him to be charged with gloominess of temper; yet he was fond of rural sports and innocent amusements. He would sometimes visit the assembly and the bowling green; and we see in his satires that he knew how to laugh at folly. His wit was poignant, and always levelled at those who showed any contempt for decency or religion; an instance of which we have remarked in his extemporary epigram on Voltaire.

Dr. Young rose betimes, and engaged with his domestics in the duties of Morning Prayer. He is said to have read but little; but he noted what he read, and many of his books were so swelled with folding down his favourite passages, that they would hardly shut. He was moderate in his meals, and rarely drank wine, except when he was ill; being (as he used to say) unwilling to waste the succours of sickness on the stability of health. After a slight refreshment, he retired to rest early in the evening, even though he might have company who wished to prolong his stay.

He lived at a moderate expense, rather inclined to parsimony than profusion; and seems to have possessed just conceptions of the vanity of the world; yet (such is the inconsistency of man!) he courted honours and preferments at the borders of the grave, even so late as 1758; but none were then conferred. It has, however, been asserted, that he had a pension of 200*l.* a year from government, conferred under the auspices of Walpole.

At last, when he was full fourscore, the author of the Night Thoughts,

"Who thought e'en gold itself might come a day too late,"

was made Clerk of the Closet to the Princess Dowager of Wales. What retarded his promotion so long is not easy to determine. Some attribute it to his attachment to the Prince of Wales and his friends; and others assert, that the King thought him sufficiently provided for. Certain it is, that he knew no straits in pecuniary matters; and that in the method he has recommended of estimating human life, honours are of little value.

His merits as an author have already been considered in a review of his works; and nothing seems necessary to be added, but the following general characters of his composition, from Blair and Johnson.

Dr. Blair says, in his celebrated lectures: "Among moral and didactic poets, Dr. Young is of too great eminence to be passed over without notice. In all his works, the marks of strong genius appear. His Universal Passion, possesses the full merit of that animated conciseness of style, and lively description of character, which I mention as requisite in satirical and didactic compositions. Though his wit may often be thought too sparkling, and his sentences too pointed, yet the vivacity of his fancy is so great, as to entertain every reader. In his Night Thoughts there is much energy of expression; in the three first, there are several pathetic passages; and scattered through them all, happy images and allusions, as well as pious reflections, occur. But the sentiments are frequently overstrained, and turgid; and the style is too harsh and obscure to be pleasing."

The same critic has said of our author in another place, that his "merit in figurative language is great, and deserves to be remarked. No writer, ancient or modern, had a stronger imagination than Dr. Young, or one more fertile in figures of every kind; his metaphors are often new, and often natural and beautiful. But his imagination was strong and rich, rather than delicate and correct."

These strictures may be thought severe; but it should be remembered, that an author derives far more honour from such a discriminate character, from a judicious critic, than from the indiscriminate commendation of an admirer. The following is the conclusion of Dr. Johnson's critique, and shall conclude these memoirs.

"It must be allowed of Young's poetry, that it abounds in thought, but without much accuracy of selection.—When he lays hold on a thought, he pursues it beyond expectation, [and] sometimes happily, as in his parallel of *quicksilver* and *pleasure* .... which is very ingenious, very subtle, and almost exact .....

"His versification is his own; neither his blank nor his rhyming lines have any resemblance to those of former writers; he picks up no hemisticks, he copies no favourite expressions; he seems to have laid up no stores of thought or diction, but to owe all to the fortuitous suggestions of the present moment. Yet I have reason to believe that, when he once formed a new design, he then laboured it with very patient industry, and that he composed with great labour and frequent revisions.

"His verses are formed by no certain model; he is no more like himself in his different productions than he is like others. He seems never to have studied prosody, nor to have any direction, but from his own ear. But with all his defects, he was a man of genius, and a poet."

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

DR. EDWARD YOUNG.

The Complaint.

PREFACE.

As the occasion of this Poem was real, not fictitious, so the method pursued in it was rather imposed by what spontaneously arose in the Author's mind on that occasion, than meditated or designed; which will appear very probable from the nature of it; for it differs from the common mode of poetry, which is, from long narrations to draw short morals: here, on the contrary, the narrative is short, and the morality arising from it makes the bulk of the Poem. The reason of it is that the facts mentioned did naturally pour these moral reflections on the thoughts of the writer.

NIGHT I.

ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

To the Right Hon. Arthur Onslow, Esq., Speaker of the House of Commons.

TIRED Nature's sweet restorer, balmy Sleep!
He, like the world, his ready visit pays,
Where Fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes;
Swift on his downy pinion flies from wo,
And lights on lids unsullied with a tear.
From short (as usual) and disturbed repose
I wake: how happy they who wake no more!
Yet that were vain, if dreams infest the grave.
I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams
Tumultuous, where my wrecked desponding thought
From wave to wave of fancied misery
At random drove, her helm of reason lost.
Though now restored, 'tis only change of pain,
(A bitter change!) severer for severe;
The day too short for my distress; and night,
Ev'n in the zenith of her dark domain,
Is sunshine to the colour of my fate.
Night, sable goddess! from her ebon throne,
In rayless majesty now stretches forth
Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumbering world.
Silence how dead! and darkness how profound!
Nor eye nor listening ear an object finds;
Creation sleeps. 'Tis as the general pulse
Of life stood still, and Nature made a pause;
An awful pause! prophetic of her end.
And let her prophecy be soon fulfilled:
Fate drop the curtain; I can lose no more.
Silence and Darkness! solemn sisters! twins
From ancient Night, who nurse the tender thought
To reason, and on reason build resolve,
(That column of true majesty in man)
Assist me: I will thank you in the grave;
The grave your kingdom: there this frame shall fall
A victim sacred to your dreary shrine.
But what are ye?—
Thou who did'st put to flight
Primeval Silence, when the morning stars,
Exulting, shouted o'er the rising ball;
O Thou! whose word from solid darkness struck
That spark, the sun, strike wisdom from my soul;
My soul, which flies to thee, her trust her treasure,
As misers to their gold, while others rest.
Through this opaque of nature and of soul,
This double night, transmit one pitying ray,
To lighten and to cheer. O lead my mind,
(A mind that fain would wander from its wo)
Lead it through various scenes of life and death,
And from each scene the noblest truths inspire,
Nor less inspire my conduct than my song;
Teach my best reason, reason; my best will
Teach rectitude; and fix my firm resolve
Wisdom to wed, and pay her long arrear:
Nor let the phial of thy vengeance, poured
On this devoted head, be poured in vain.
The bell strikes one. We take no note of time
But from its loss: to give it then a tongue
Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke
I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright,
It is the knell of my departed hours.
Where are they? With the years beyond the flood.
It is the signal that demands despatch:
How much is to be done? My hopes and fears
Start up alarmed, and o'er life's narrow verge

Look down—on what? A fathomless abyss.
A dread eternity! how surely mine!
And can eternity belong to me,
Poor pensioner on the bounties of an hour!
How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,
How complicate, how wonderful, is man!
How passing wonder He who made him such!
Who centered in our make such strange extremes,
From different natures marvellously mixed,
Connexion exquisite of distant worlds!
Distinguished link in being's endless chain!
Midway from nothing to the Deity!
A beam ethereal, sullied and absorpt!
Though sullied and dishonoured, still divine!
Dim miniature of greatness absolute!
An heir of glory, a frail child of dust!
Helpless immortal! insect infinite!
A worm! a god!—I tremble at myself,
And in myself am lost. At home a stranger,
Thought wanders up and down, surprised, aghast,
And wondering at her own. How reason reels?
O what a miracle to man is man!
Triumphantly distressed! what joy! what dread!
Alternately transported and alarmed;
What can preserve my life! or what destroy!
An angel's arm can't snatch me from the grave;
Legions of angels can't confine me there.
'Tis past conjecture; all things rise in proof.
While o'er my limbs Sleep's soft dominion spread,
What though my soul fantastic measures trod
O'er fairy fields, or mourned along the gloom
Of pathless woods, or down the craggy steep
Hurled headlong, swam with pain the mantled pool,
Or scaled the cliff, or danced on hollow winds
With antic shapes, wild natives of the brain!
Her ceaseless flight, though devious, speaks her nature
Of subtler essence than the trodden clod;
Active, aërial, towering, unconfined,
Unfettered with her gross companion's fall.
Even silent night proclaims my soul immortal;
Even silent night proclaims eternal day!
For human weal Heaven husbands all events:
Dull sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain.
Why then their loss deplore, that are not lost?
Why wanders wretched Thought their tombs around
In infidel distress? Are angels there?
Slumbers, raked up in dust, ethereal fire?
They live! they greatly live a life on earth
Unkindled, unconceived, and from an eye
Of tenderness let heavenly pity fall,
On me, more justly numbered with the dead.
This is the desert, this the solitude:
How populous, how vital is the grave!
This is creation's melancholy vault,
The vale funereal, the sad cypress gloom;
The land of apparitions, empty shades!
All, all on earth is shadow, all beyond
Is substance; the reverse is Folly's creed.
How solid all, where change shall be no more!
This is the bud of being, the dim dawn,
The twilight of our day, the vestibule.
Life's theatre as yet is shut, and Death,
Strong Death, alone can heave the massy bar,
This gross impediment of clay remove,
And make us, embryos of existence, free.
From real life but little more remote
Is he, not yet a candidate for light,
The future embryo, slumbering in his sire.
Embryos we must be till we burst the shell,
Yon ambient azure shell, and spring to life,
The life of gods, O transport! and of man.
Yet man, fool man! here buries all his thoughts,
Inters celestial hopes without one sigh:
Prisoner of earth and pent beneath the moon,
Here pinions all his wishes; wing'd by Heav'n
To fly at infinite, and reach it there,
Where seraphs gather immortality.
On Life's fair tree, fast by the throne of God,
What golden joys ambrosial clustering glow
In his full beam, and ripen for the just,
Where momentary ages are no more!
Where Time, and Pain, and Chance, and Death expire!
And is it in the flight of threescore years
To push eternity from human thought,
And smother souls immortal in the dust?
A soul immortal, spending all her fires,
Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness,
Thrown into tumult, raptur'd, or alarm'd
At aught this scene can threaten or indulge,
Resembles ocean into tempest wrought,
To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.
Where falls this censure? it o'erwhelms myself.
How was my heart instructed by the world!
O how self-fetter'd was my groveling soul!
How, like a worm, was I wrapt round and round
In silken thought, which reptile Fancy spun,
Till darken'd Reason lay quite clouded o'er,
With soft conceit of endless comfort here,
Nor yet put forth her wings to reach the skies!
Night-visions may befriend, (as sung above:)
Our waking dreams are fatal. How I dream,
Of things impossible! (could sleep do more?)
Of joys perpetual in perpetual change!
Of stable pleasures on the tossing wave;
Eternal sunshine in the storms of life!
How richly were my noon-tide trances hung
With gorgeous tapestries of pictur'd joys,
Joy behind joy, in endless perspective;
Till at Death's toll, whose restless iron tongue
Calls daily for his millions at a meal,
Starting I woke, and found myself undone.
Where now my frenzy's pompous furniture?
The cobweb'd cottage, with its ragged wall
Of mouldering mud, is royalty to me!

The spider's most attenuated thread
Is cord, is cable, to man's tender tie
On earthly bliss: it breaks at every breeze.
O ye blest scenes of permanent delight!
Full above measure! lasting beyond bound!
A perpetuity of bliss is bliss.
Could you, so rich in rapture, fear an end,
That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy,
And quite unparadise the realms of light.
Safe are you lodged above these rolling spheres,
The baleful influence of whose giddy dance
Sheds sad vicissitude on all beneath.
Here teems with revolutions every hour,
And rarely for the better; or the best
More mortal than the common births of Fate.
Each Moment has its sickle, emulous
Of Time's enormous scythe, whose ample sweep
Strikes empires from the root: each Moment plays
His little weapon in the narrower sphere
Of sweet domestic comfort, and cuts down
The fairest bloom of sublunary bliss.
Bliss! sublunary bliss!—proud words, and vain!
Implicit treason to divine decree!
A bold invasion of the rights of Heaven!
I clasped the phantoms, and I found them air.
O had I weighed it ere my fond embrace,
What darts of agony had missed my heart!
Death! great proprietor of all! 'tis thine
To tread out empire, and to quench the stars.
The sun himself by thy permission shines,
And, one day, thou shalt pluck him from his sphere:
Amid such mighty plunder, why exhaust
Thy partial quiver on a mark so mean?
Why thy peculiar rancour wreaked on me?
Insatiate archer! could not one suffice?
Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain:
And thrice, ere thrice yon moon had filled her horn.
O Cynthia! why so pale? dost thou lament
Thy wretched neighbour? grieve to see thy wheel
Of ceaseless change outwhirled in human life?
How wanes my borrow'd bliss! from Fortune's smile
Precarious courtesy! not virtue's sure,
Self-given, solar ray of sound delight.
In every varied posture, place, and hour,
How widowed every thought of every joy!
Thought, busy thought! too busy for my peace,
Through the dark postern of time long elaps'd,
Led softly, by the stillness of the night,
Led, like a murderer, (and such it proves!)
Strays (wretched rover!) o'er the pleasing past;
In quest of wretchedness perversely strays,
And finds all desert now; and meets the ghosts
Of my departed joys, a numerous train!
I rue the riches of my former fate;
Sweet comfort's blasted clusters I lament;
I tremble at the blessings once so dear,
And every pleasure pains me to the heart.
Yet why complain? or why complain for one?
Hangs out the sun his lustre but for me,
The single man? are angels all beside?
I mourn for millions; 'tis the common lot:
In this shape or in that has Fate entail'd
The mother's throes on all of woman born;
Not more the children than sure heirs of pain.

War, famine, pest, volcano, storm, and fire,
Intestine broils, Oppression, with her heart
Wrapt up in triple brass, besiege mankind.
God's image, disinherited of day,
Here plung'd in mines, forgets a sun was made:
There beings, deathless as their haughty lord,
Are hammer'd to the galling oar for life,
And plough the winter's wave, and reap despair
Some for hard masters, broken under arms,
In battle lopt away, with half their limbs,
Beg bitter bread through realms their valour saved
If so the tyrant or his minion doom.
Want and incurable disease, (fell pair!)
On hopeless multitudes remorseless seize
At once, and make a refuge of the grave.
How groaning hospitals eject their dead!
What numbers groan for sad admission there!
What numbers, once in Fortune's lap high-fed,
Solicit the cold hand of Charity!
To shock us more, solicit it in vain!
Ye silken sons of Pleasure! since in pains
You rue more modish visits, visit here,
And breathe from your debauch: give, and reduce
Surfeits dominion o'er you. But so great
Your impudence, you blush at what is right.

Happy! did sorrow seize on such alone.
Not prudence can defend, or virtue save,
Disease invades the chastest temperance,
And punishment the guiltless; and alarm,
Through thickest shades, pursues the fond of peace.
Man's caution often into danger turns,
And, his guard falling, crushes him to death.
Not Happiness itself makes good her name;
Our very wishes gives us not our wish.
How distant oft the thing we dote on most
From that for which we dote, felicity!
The smoothest course of Nature has its pains,
And truest friends, through error, wound our rest.
Without misfortune, what calamities!
And what hostilities, without a foe!
Nor are foes wanting to the best on earth.
But endless is the list of human ills,
And sighs might sooner fail than cause to sigh.

A part how small of the terraqueous globe
Is tenanted by man! the rest a waste,
Rocks, deserts, frozen seas, and burning sands!
Wild haunts of monsters, poisons, stings, and death,
Such is earth's melancholy map! but, far
More sad! this earth is a true map of man:
So bounded are its haughty lord's delights
To wo's wide empire, where deep troubles toss.
Loud sorrows howl, envenom'd passions bite.

Ravenous calamities our vitals seize,
And threatening Fame wide opens to devour.
What then am I, who sorrow for myself?
In age, in infancy, from others' aid
Is all our hope; to teach us to be kind:
That Nature's first, last lesson to mankind.
The selfish heart deserves the pain it feels:
More generous sorrow, while it sinks exalts,
And conscious virtue mitigates the pang.
Nor virtue more than prudence bids me give
Swoln thought a second channel: who divide,
They weaken, too, the torrent of their grief.
Take, then, O World! thy much indebted tear.
How sad a sight is human happiness
To those, whose thought can pierce beyond an hour!
O thou! whate'er thou art, whose heart exults,
Wouldst thou I should congratulate thy fate!
I know thou wouldst; thy pride demands it from me:
Let thy pride pardon what thy nature needs,
The salutary censure of a friend;
Thou happy wretch! by blindness thou art bless'd;
By dotage dandled to perpetual smiles.
Know, smiler! at thy peril art thou pleas'd;
Thy pleasure is the promise of thy pain.
Misfortune, like a creditor severe,
But rises in demand for her delay;
She makes a scourge of past prosperity,
To sting thee more, and double thy distress.
Lorenzo! Fortune makes her court to thee;
Thy fond heart dances while the syren sings.
Dear is thy welfare; think me not unkind;
I would not damp, but to secure thy joys.
Think not that fear is sacred to the storm;
Stand on thy guard against the smiles of Fate.
Is Heaven tremendous in its frowns? most sure:
And in its favours formidable too:
Its favours here are trials, not rewards;
A call to duty, not discharge from care,
And should alarm us full as much as woes,
Awake us to their cause and consequence,
And make us tremble, weighed with our desert;
Awe Nature's tumult, and chastise her joys,
Lest while we clasp we kill them; nay, invert
To worse than simple misery their charms.
Revolted joys, like foes in civil war,
Like bosom friendships to resentments soured,
With rage envenomed rise against our peace.
Beware what earth calls happiness; beware
All joys but joys that never can expire.
Who builds on less than an immortal base,
Fond as he seems, condemns his joys to death.
Mine died with thee, Philander; thy last sigh
Dissolved the charm; the disenchanted earth
Lost all her lustre. Where her glittering towers?
Her golden mountains where? all darkened down
To naked waste; a dreary vale of tears.
The great magician's dead! Thou poor, pale piece
Of outcast earth, in darkness: what a change
From yesterday! Thy darling hope so near,
(Long-laboured prize!) O how ambition flushed
Thy glowing cheek; ambition truly great,
Of virtuous praise. Death's subtle seed within,
(Sly, treacherous miner!) working in the dark,
Smiled at thy well concerted scheme, and beckoned
The worm to riot on that rose so red,
Unfaded ere it fell, one moment's prey!
Man's foresight is conditionally wise.
Lorenzo! wisdom into folly turns,
Oft the first instant its idea fair
To labouring thought is born. How dim our eye!
The present moment terminates our sight;
Clouds, thick as those on Doomsday, drown the next:
We penetrate, we prophesy in vain,
Time is dealt out by particles, and each
Are mingled with the streaming sands of life.
By Fate's inviolable oath is sworn
Deep silence,—where Eternity begins.
By Nature's law, what may be may be now:
There's no prerogative in human hours.
In human hearts what bolder thoughts can rise
Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn?
Where is to-morrow? In another world.
For numbers this is certain; the reverse
Is sure to none; and yet on this *perhaps*,
This *peradventure*, infamous for lies,
As on a rock of adamant we build
Our mountain-hopes, spin out eternal schemes,
As we the fatal sisters could outspin,
And, big with life's futurities expire.
Not even Philander had bespoke his shroud;
Nor had he cause; a warning was denied.
How many fall as sudden, not as safe!
As sudden, though for years admonished home;
Of human ills the last extreme beware;
Beware, Lorenzo! a slow sudden death;
How dreadful that deliberate surprise!
Be wise to-day; 'tis madness to defer:
Next day the fatal precedent will plead,
Thus on, till wisdom is pushed out of life.
Procrastination is the thief of time;
Year after year it steals, till all are fled,
And to the mercies of a moment leaves
The vast concerns of an eternal scene.
If not so frequent, would not this be strange?
That 'tis so frequent, this is stranger still.
Of man's miraculous mistakes this bears
The palm, 'That all men are about to live,'
For ever on the brink of being born:
All pay themselves the compliment to think
They one day shall not drivel, and their pride
On this reversion takes up ready praise;
At least their own; their future selves applauds,
How excellent that life they ne'er will lead!
Time lodged in their own hands is Folly's vails;
That lodged in Fate's to wisdom they consign;

The thing they can't but purpose, they postpone.
'Tis not in folly not to scorn a fool,
And scarce in human wisdom to do more.
All promise is poor dilatory man,
And that through every stage. When young, indeed,
In full content we sometimes nobly rest,
Unanxious for ourselves, and only wish,
As duteous sons, our fathers were more wise.
At thirty man suspects himself a fool;
Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;
At fifty chides his infamous delay,
Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve;
In all the magnanimity of thought
Resolves, and re-resolves; then dies the same.
And why? because he thinks himself immortal,
All men think all men mortal but themselves;
Themselves, when some alarming shock of Fate
Strikes through their wounded hearts the sudden dread:
But their hearts wounded, like the wounded air,
Soon close; where past the shaft no trace is found.
As from the wing no scar the sky retains,
The parted wave no furrow from the keel,
So dies in human hearts the thought of death:
Even with the tender tear which Nature sheds
O'er those we love, we drop it in their grave.
Can I forget Philander? that were strange!
O my full heart!—But should I give it vent,
The longest night, though longer far, would fail,
And the lark listen to my midnight song.
The sprightly lark's shrill matin wakes the morn.
Grief's sharpest thorn hard pressing on my breast,
I strive, with wakeful melody, to cheer
The sullen gloom, sweet Philomel! like thee,
And call the stars to listen: every star
Is deaf to mine, enamoured of thy lay.
Yet be not vain; there are who thine excel,
And charm through distant ages. Wrapt in shade,
Prisoner of darkness! to the silent hours
How often I repeat their rage divine,
To lull my griefs, and steal my heart from wo!
In roll their raptures, but not catch their fire.
Dark, though not blind, like thee Mæonidas!
Or, Milton! thee; ah, could I reach your strain!
Or his* who made Mæonidas our own.
Man, too, he sung: immortal man I sing:
Oft bursts my song beyond the bounds of life:
What, now, but immortality can please?
O had he pressed his theme, pursued the track
Which opens out of darkness into day!
O had he mounted on his wing of fire,
Soared where I sink, and sung immortal man,
How had it blessed mankind, and rescued me!

* Pope.

NIGHT II.

ON TIME, DEATH, AND FRIENDSHIP

To the Right Honourable, the Earl of Wilmington.

'When the cock crew he wept,'—smote by that eye
Which looks on me, on all; that Power who bids
This midnight sentinel, with clarion shrill,
Emblem of that which shall awake the dead,
Rouse souls from slumber, into thoughts of Heaven.
Shall I too weep? where then is fortitude?
And fortitude abandoned, where is man?
I know the terms on which he sees the light:
He that is born is listed: life is war;
Eternal war with wo: who bears it best
Deserves it least.—On other themes I'll dwell.
Lorenzo! let me turn my thoughts on thee
And thine; on themes may profit; profit there
Where most thy need. Themes, too, the genuine growth
Of dear Philander's dust. He thus, though dead,
May still befriend.—What themes? Time's wondrous price?
Death, friendship, and Philander's final scene.
So could I touch these themes as might obtain
Thine ear, nor leave thy heart quite disengaged,
The good deed would delight me; half-impress
On my dark cloud an iris, and from grief
Call glory.—Dost thou mourn Philander's fate?
I know thou say'st it: says thy life the same?
He mourns the dead who lives as they desire.
Where is that thirst, that avarice of time,
(O glorious avarice!) thought of death inspires,
As rumoured robberies endear our gold?
O Time! than gold more sacred; more a load
Than lead to fools, and fools reputed wise.
What moment granted man without account?
What years are squandered, wisdom's debt unpaid!
Our wealth in days all due to that discharge.
Haste, haste, he lies in wait, he's at the door;
Insidious Death! should his strong hand arrest,
No composition sets the prisoner free.
Eternity's inexorable chain
Fast binds, and vengeance claims the full arrear.
How late I shuddered on the brink! how late
Life called for her last refuge in despair!
That time is mine, O Mead! to thee I owe;
Fain would I pay thee with eternity,
But ill my genius answers my desire:
My sickly song is mortal, past thy cure.
Accept the will:—that dies not with my strain.
For what calls thy disease, Lozenzo? not
For Esculapian, but for moral aid.
Thou think'st it folly to be wise too soon.
Youth is not rich in time; it may be poor:
Part with it as with money, sparing; pay

No moment, but in purchase of its worth;
And what its worth, ask death-beds; they can tell.
Part with it as with life, reluctant; big
With holy hope of nobler time to come;
Time higher aimed, still nearer the great mark
Of men and angels, virtue more divine.
Is this our duty, wisdom, glory, gain?
(These Heaven benign in vital union binds)
And sport we like the natives of the bough,
When vernal suns inspire? Amusement reigns,
Man's great demand: to trifle is to live:
And is it then a trifle, too, to die?
Thou say'st I preach, Lorenzo? 'tis confest.
What if, for once, I preach thee quite awake?
Who wants amusement in the flame of battle?
Is it not treason to the soul immortal,
Her foes in arms, eternity the prize?
Will toys amuse, when med'cines can not cure?
When spirits ebb, when life's enchanting scenes
Their lustre lose, and lessen in our sight,
As lands and cities with their glittering spires,
To the poor shattered bark, by sudden storm
Thrown off to sea, and soon to perish there;
Will toys amuse? No; thrones will then be toys,
And earth and skies seem dust upon the scale.
Redeem we time?—Its loss we dearly buy.
What pleads Lorenzo for his high-priz'd sports?
He pleads time's numerous blanks; he loudly pleads
The straw-like trifles on life's common stream.
From whom those blanks and trifles but from thee?
No blank, no trifle, Nature made, or meant.
Virtue, or purposed virtue, still be thine;
This cancels thy complaint at once; this leaves
In act no trifle, and no blank in time.
This greatens, fills, immortalizes all;
This the blest art of turning all to gold;
This the good heart's prerogative to raise
A royal tribute from the poorest hours:
Immense revenue! every moment pays.
If nothing more than purpose in thy power,
Thy purpose firm is equal to the deed.
Who does the best his circumstance allows,
Does well, acts nobly; angels could no more.
Our outward act, indeed, admits restraint:
'Tis not in things o'er thought to domineer.
Guard well thy thought: our thoughts are heard in Heaven!
On all-important time, through every age,
Though much and warm the wise have urged, the man
Is yet unborn who duly weighs an hour.
'I've lost a day,'—the prince who nobly cried,
Had been an emperor, without his crown.
Of Rome? say, rather, lord of human race:
He spoke as if deputed by mankind.
So should all speak: so reason speaks in all:
From the soft whispers of that God in man,
Why fly to folly, why to frenzy fly,
For rescue from the blessings we possess?
Time, the supreme!—Time is Eternity;
Pregnant with all eternity can give;
Pregnant with all that makes archangels smile.
Who murders Time, he crushes in the birth
A power ethereal, only not adored.
Ah! how unjust to Nature and himself
Is thoughtless, thankless, inconsistent man!
Like children babbling nonsense in their sports,
We censure Nature for a span too short;
That span too short we tax as tedious too;
Torture invention, all expedients tire,
To lash the lingering moments into speed,
And whirl us (happy riddance!) from ourselves.
Art, brainless Art! our furious charioteer,
(For Nature's voice unstifled would recall)
Drives headlong towards the precipice of death;
Death most our dread; death thus more dreadful made.
O what a riddle of absurdity!
Leisure is pain; takes off our chariot-wheels:
How heavily we drag the load of life!
Blest leisure is our curse; like that of Cain,
It makes us wander, wander earth around,
To fly that tyrant Thought. As Atlas groaned
The world beneath, we groan beneath an hour.
We cry for mercy to the next amusement;
The next amusement mortgages our fields;
Slight inconvenience! prisons hardly frown,
From hateful Time if prisons set us free.
Yet when Death kindly tenders us relief,
We call him cruel; years to moments shrink,
Ages to years. The telescope is turned:
To man's false optics (from his folly false)
Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,
And seems to creep, decrepit with his age.
Behold him when past by; what then is seen
But his broad pinions swifter than the winds?
And all mankind, in contradiction strong,
Rueful, aghast, cry out on his career.
Leave to thy foes these errors and these ills;
To Nature just, their cause and cure explore.
Not short Heaven's bounty, boundless our expense;
No niggard Nature, men are prodigals.
We waste, not use our time; we breathe, not live.
Time wasted is existence; used, is life:
And bare existence man, to live ordained,
Wrings and oppresses with enormous weight.
And why? since time was given for use, not waste,
Enjoined to fly, with tempest, tide, and stars,
To keep his speed, nor ever wait for man.
Time's use was doomed a pleasure, waste a pain,
That man might feel his error if unseen,
And, feeling, fly to labour for his cure;
Not blundering, split on idleness for ease.
Life's cares are comforts; such by Heaven designed;
He that has none must make them, or be wretched
Cares are employments, and without employ

The soul is on a rack, the rack of rest,
To souls most adverse, action all their joy.
Here then the riddle, marked above, unfolds;
Then time turns torment, when man turns a fool.
We rave, we wrestle with great Nature's plan;
We thwart the Deity; and 'tis decreed,
Who thwart His will shall contradict their own.
Hence our unnatural quarrels with ourselves;
Our thoughts at enmity; our bosom-broil:
We push Time from us, and we wish him back:
Lavish of lustrums, and yet fond of life:
Life we think long and short; death seek and shun:
Body and soul, like peevish man and wife,
United jar, and yet are loth to part.
Oh the dark days of vanity! while here
How tasteless! and how terrible when gone!
Gone? they ne'er go; when past, they haunt us still:
The spirit walks of every day deceased,
And smiles an angel, or a fury frowns.
Nor death nor life delight us. If time past
And time possest both pain us, what can please?
That which the Deity to please ordained,
Time used. The man who consecrates his hours
By vigorous effort and an honest aim,
At once he draws the sting of life and death;
He walks with Nature, and her paths are peace.
Our error's cause and cure are seen: see next
Time's nature, origin, importance, speed,
And thy great gain from urging his career.
All sensual man, because untouch'd, unseen,
He looks on time as nothing. Nothing else
Is truly man's; 'tis Fortune's—Time's a god!
Hast thou ne'er heard of Time's omnipotence?
For, or against, what wonders can he do!
And will: to stand blank neuter he disdains.
Not on those terms was Time (Heaven's stranger!) sent
On his important embassy to man.
Lorenzo! no: on the long destin'd hour,
From everlasting ages growing ripe,
That memorable hour of wondrous birth,
When the Dread Sire, on emanation bent,
And big with Nature, rising in his might,
Call'd forth Creation (for then Time was born)
By Godhead streaming through a thousand worlds;
Not on those terms, from the great days of Heaven,
From old eternity's mysterious orb
Was Time cut off, and cast beneath the skies;
The skies, which watch him in his new abode,
Measuring his motions by revolving spheres,
That horologe machinery divine.
Hours, days, and months, and years, his children play,
Like numerous wings, around him, as he flies;
Or rather, as unequal plumes, they shape
His ample pinions, swift as darted flame,
To gain his goal, to reach his ancient rest,
And join anew Eternity, his sire;
In his immutability to nest,
When worlds, that count his circles now, unhing'd
(Fate the loud signal sounding) headlong rush
To timeless night and chaos, whence they rose.
Why spur the speedy? why with levities
New-wing thy short, short day's too rapid flight?
Know'st thou, or what thou dost, or what is done?
Man flies from time, and time from man: too soon,
In sad divorce this double flight must end;
And then, where are we? where, Lorenzo, then,
Thy sports, thy pomps? I grant thee in a state
Not unambitious, in the ruffled shroud,
Thy Parian tomb's triumphant arch beneath.
Has Death his fopperies? then well may Life
Put on her plume, and in her rainbow shine.
Ye well-array'd! ye lilies of our land!
Ye lilies male! who neither toil nor spin,
(As sister-lilies might) if not so wise
As Solomon, more sumptuous to the sight!
Ye delicate! who nothing can support,
Yourselves most insupportable! for whom
The winter-rose must blow, the sun put on
A brighter beam in Leo; silky soft,
Favonious! breathe still softer, or be chid;
And other world send odours, sauce, and song,
And robes, and notions, fram'd in foreign looms!
O ye Lorenzos of our age! who deem
One moment unamus'd a misery
Not made for feeble man! who call aloud
For every bawble drivell'd o'er by sense;
For rattles and conceits of every cast;
For change of follies and relays of joy
To drag your patient through the tedious length
Of a short winter's day——say, sages! say,
Wit's oracles! say dreamers of gay dreams!
How will you weather an eternal night,
Where such expedients fail?—
O treacherous Conscience! while she seems to sleep
On rose and myrtle, lull'd with syren song
While she seems, nodding o'er her charge, to drop
On headlong Appetite the slackened rein,
And gives us up to license unrecall'd,
Unmark'd:—see, from behind her secret stand,
The sly informer minutes every fault,
And her dread diary with horror fills.
Not the gross act alone employs her pen;
She reconnoitres Fancy's airy band.
A watchful foe! the formidable spy
Listening, o'erhears the whispers of our camp,
Our dawning purposes of heart explores,
And steals our embryos of iniquity.
As all-rapacious usurers conceal
Their doomsday-book from all-consuming heirs,
Thus, with indulgence most severe, she treats
Us spendthrifts of inestimable time,
Unnoted, notes each moment misapplied;
In leaves more durable than leaves of brass
Writes our whole history, which Death shall read

In every pale delinquent's private ear,
And judgment publish; publish to more worlds
Than this, and endless age in groans resound.
Lorenzo! such that sleeper in thy breast;
Such is her slumber, and her vengeance such
For slighted counsel; such thy future peace;
And think'st thou still thou canst be wise too soon?
But why on time so lavish is my song?
On this great theme kind Nature keeps a school
To teach her sons herself. Each night we die;
Each morn are born anew: each day a life!
And shall we kill each day? If trifling kills,
Sure vice must butcher. O what heaps of slain
Cry out for vengeance on us! Time destroy'd
Is suicide, where more than blood is spilt.
Time flies, death urges, knells call, Heaven invites,
Hell threatens: all exerts; in effort all,
More than creation labours! Labours more?—
And is there in creation what, amidst
This tumult universal, wing'd despatch,
And ardent energy, supinely yawns?——
Man sleeps, and man alone; and man, whose fate,
Fate irresistible, entire, extreme,
Endless, hair-hung, breeze-shaken, o'er the gulf
A moment trembles; drops! and man, for whom
All else is an alarm—man, the sole cause
Of this surrounding storm! and yet he sleeps,
As the storm rocked to rest.—Throw years away?
Throw empires, and be blameless; moments seize,
Heaven's on their wing! a moment we may wish,
When worlds want wealth to buy. Bid Day stand still,
Bid him drive back his car, and reimport
The period past, regive the given hour.
Lorenzo! more than miracles we want.
Lorenzo—O for yesterdays to come!
Such is the language of the man awake,
His ardour such for what oppresses thee.
And is his ardour vain, Lorenzo? No;
That more than miracle the gods indulge.
To-day is yesterday return'd; return'd
Full-powered to cancel, expiate, raise, adorn,
And reinstate us on the rock of peace.
Let it not share its predecessor's fate,
Nor like its elder sisters, die a fool.
Shall it evaporate in fume, fly off
Fuliginous, and stain us deeper still?
Shall we be poorer for the plenty poured?
More wretched for the clemencies of Heaven?
Where shall I find him? Angels! tell me where:
You know him: he is near you; point him out.
Shall I see glories beaming from his brow,
Or trace his footsteps by the rising flowers?
Your golden wings, now hovering o'er him, shed
Protection; now are waving in applause
To that blest son of foresight! lord of fate!
That awful independent on to-morrow!
Whose work is done; who triumphs in the past;
Whose yesterdays look backwards with a smile,
Nor, like the Parthian, wound him as they fly;
That common, but opprobious lot! Past hours,
If not by guilt, yet wound us by their flight.
If folly bounds our prospect by the grave;
All feeling of futurity benumbed;
All godlike passion for eternals quenched;
All relish of realities expired;
Renounced all correspondence with the skies;
Our freedom chained; quite wingless our desire;
In sense dark-prisoned all that ought to soar;
Prone to the centre; crawling in the dust;
Dismounted every great and glorious aim;
Imbruted every faculty divine;
Heart-buried in the rubbish of the world,
The world, that gulf of souls, immortal souls,
Souls elevate, angelic, winged with fire
To reach the distant skies, and triumph there
On thrones, which shall not mourn their masters changed;
Though we from earth, ethereal they that fell.
Such veneration due, O man, to man!
Who venerate themselves the world despise,
For what, gay friend! is the escutcheoned world,
Which hangs out death in one eternal night?
A night that glooms us in the noon-tide ray,
And wraps our thought at banquet in the shroud.
Life's little stage is a small eminence,
Inch high the grave above, that home of man,
Where dwells the multitude: we gaze around;
We read their monuments; we sigh; and while
We sigh we sink; and are what we deplored;
Lamenting or lamented all our lot!
Is Death at distance? No; he has been on thee,
And given sure earnest of his final blow.
Those hours that lately smiled, where are they now?
Pallid to thought, and ghastly! drowned, all drowned
In that great deep which nothing disembogues!
And, dying, they bequeathed thee small renown.
The rest are on the wing: how fleet their flight!
Already has the fatal train took fire;
A moment, and the world's blown up to thee;
The sun is darkness, and the stars are dust.
'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours,
And ask them what report they bore to Heaven,
And how they might have borne more welcome news.
Their answers form what men Experience call;
If Wisdom's friend her best, if not, worst foe.
O reconcile them! kind Experience cries,
"There's nothing here but what as nothing weighs;
The more our joy, the more we know it vain,
And by success are tutored to despair."
Nor is it only thus, but must be so.
Who knows not this, though gray, is still a child.
Loose then from earth the grasp of fond desire;
Weigh anchor, and some happier clime explore.

Art thou so moored thou canst not disengage,
Nor give thy thoughts a ply to future scenes?
Since by life's passing breath, blown up from earth,
Light as the summer's dust, we take in air
A moment's giddy flight, and fall again,
Join the dull mass, increase the trodden soil,
And sleep, till Earth herself shall be no more;
Since then (as emmets, their small world o'er-thrown)
We, sore-amazed, from out earth's ruins crawl,
And rise to fate extreme of foul or fair,
As man's own choice, (controller of the skies!)
As man's despotic will, perhaps one hour,
(O how omnipotent is time!) decrees;
Should not each warning give a strong alarm?
Warning, far less than that of bosom torn
From bosom, bleeding o'er the sacred dead!
Should not each dial strike us as we pass,
Portentous, as the written wall which struck,
O'er midnight bowls, the proud Assyrian pale,
Ere-while high-flushed with insolence and wine?
Like that, the dial speaks, and points to thee,
Lorenzo! loth to break thy banquet up:—
"O Man! thy kingdom is departing from thee,
And, while it lasts, is emptier than my shade."
Its silent language such; nor need'st thou call
Thy Magi to decipher what it means.
Know, like the Median, Fate is in thy walls:
Dost ask how? whence? Belshazzar-like, amazed:
Man's make incloses the sure seeds of death;
Life feeds the murderer: ingrate! he thrives
On her own meal, and then his nurse devours.
But here, Lorenzo, the delusion lies;
That solar shadow, as it measures life,
It life resembles too. Life speeds away
From point to point, though seeming to stand still.
The cunning fugitive is swift by stealth:
Too subtle is the movement to be seen;
Yet soon man's hour is up, and we are gone.
Warnings point out our danger; gnomons, time:
As these are useless when the sun is set,
So those, but when more glorious Reason shines.
Reason should judge in all; in Reason's eye
That sedentary shadow travels hard:
But such our gravitation to the wrong,
So prone our hearts to whisper what we wish,
'Tis later with the wise than he's aware.
A Wilmington goes slower than the sun;
And all mankind mistake their time of day;
Even age itself. Fresh hopes are hourly sown
In furrowed brows. So gentle life's descent,
We shut our eyes, and think it is a plain.
We take fair days in winter for the spring,
And turn our blessings into bane. Since oft
Man must compute that age he can not feel,
He scarce believes he's older for his years.
Thus at life's latest eve we keep in store
One disappointment, sure to crown the rest,
The disappointment of a promised hour.

On this, or similar, Philander! thou
Whose mind was moral as the preacher's tongue,
And strong to wield all science worth the name,
How often we talked down the summer's sun,
And cooled our passions by the breezy stream.
How often thawed and shortened winter's eve
By conflict kind, that struck out latent truth,
Best found so sought, to the recluse more coy!
Thoughts disentangle passing o'er the lip;
Clear runs the thread; if not, tis thrown away,
Or kept to tie up nonsense for a song;
Song, fashionably fruitless, such as stains
The fancy, and unhallowed passion fires,
Chiming her saints to Cytherea's fane.
Know'st thou, Lorenzo! what a friend contains?
As bees mixed nectar draw from fragrant flowers,
So men from Friendship, wisdom and delight;
Twins, tied by Nature; if they part they die.
Hast thou no friend to set thy mind abroach?
Good sense will stagnate. Thoughts shut up want air,
And spoil, like bales unopened to the sun.
Had thought been all, sweet speech had been denied;
Speech! thought's canal; speech! thought's criterion too:
Thought in mine may come forth gold or dross:
When coined in word we know its real worth
If sterling, store it for thy future use;
'Twill buy thee benefit, perhaps renown
Thought, too, delivered, is the more possessed;
Teaching, we learn; and giving, we retain
The births of intellect; when dumb, forgot.
Speech ventilates our intellectual fire;
Speech burnishes our mental magazine;
Brightens for ornament, and whets for use.
What numbers, sheathed in erudition, lie
Plunged to the hilts in venerable tomes,
And rusted in, who might have borne an edge,
And played a sprightly beam, if born to speech,
If born blest heirs of half their mother's tongue!
'Tis thought's exchange, which, like the alternate push
Of waves conflicting, breaks the learned scum,
And defecates the student's standing pool.
In contemplation is his proud resource?
'Tis poor as proud, by converse unsustained.
Rude thought runs wild in contemplation's field;
Converse, the menage, breaks it to the bit
Of due restraint; and Emulation's spur
Gives graceful energy, by rivals awed.
'Tis converse qualifies for solitude,
As exercise for salutary rest:
By that untutored, Contemplation raves;
And Nature's fool by Wisdom's is outdone
Wisdom, though richer than Peruvian mines,
And sweeter than the sweet ambrosial hive,
What is she but the means of happiness?
That unobtained, than Folly more a fool;

A melancholy fool, without her bells.
Friendship, the means of wisdom, richly gives
The precious end, which makes our wisdom wise.
Nature, in zeal for human amity,
Denies or damps an undivided joy.
Joy is an import; joy is an exchange;
Joy flies monopolists; it calls for two:
Rich fruit! heaven-planted! never plucked by one.
Needful auxiliars are our friends, to give
To social man true relish of himself.
Full on ourselves descending in a line,
Pleasure's bright beam is feeble in delight:
Delight intense is taken by rebound;
Reverberated pleasures fire the breast.
Celestial happiness! whene'er she stoops
To visit earth, one shrine the goddess find,
And one alone, to make her sweet amends
For absent Heaven—the bosom of a friend;
Where heart meets heart, reciprocally soft,
Each other's pillow to repose divine.
Beware the counterfeit; in passion's flame
Hearts melt, but melt like ice, soon harder froze.
True love strikes root in reason, passion's foe:
Virtue alone intenders us for life;
I wrong her much—intenders us for ever.
Of friendship's fairest fruits, the fruit most fair
Is virtue kindling at a rival fire.
And emulously rapid in her race.
O the soft enmity! endearing strife!
This carries Friendship to her noon-tide point,
And gives the rivet of eternity.
From Friendship, which outlives my former themes,
Glorious survivor of old Time and Death!
From Friendship, thus, that flower of heavenly seed,
The wise extract earth's most hyblean bliss,
Superior wisdom, crown'd with smiling joy.
But for whom blossoms this Elysian flower?
Abroad they find who cherish it at home.
Lorenzo! pardon what my love extorts,
An honest love, and not afraid to frown.
Though choice of follies fasten on the great,
None clings more obstinate than fancy fond,
That sacred friendship is their easy prey,
Caught by the wafture of a golden lure,
Or fascination of a high-born smile.
Their smiles the great, and the coquet, throw out
For others' hearts, tenacious of their own;
And we no less of ours, when such the bait.
Ye Fortune's cofferers! ye powers of Wealth!
Can gold gain friendship? impudence of hope!
As well mere man an angel might beget.
Love, and love only, is the loan for love.
Lorenzo! pride repress, nor hope to find
A friend, but what has found a friend in thee:
All like the purchase, few the price will pay
And this makes friends such miracles below.
What if (since daring on so nice a theme)
I show thee friendship as delicate as dear,
Of tender violations apt to die?
Reserve will wound it, and distrust destroy.
Deliberate on all things with thy friend:
But since friends grow not thick on every bough
Nor every friend unrotten at the core,
First on thy friend deliberate with thyself;
Pause, ponder, sift; not eager in the choice,
Nor jealous of the chosen: fixing, fix;
Judge before friendship, then confide till death.
Well for thy friend, but nobler far for thee.
How gallant danger for earth's highest prize!
A friend is worth all hazards we can run.
'Poor is the friendless master of a world:
A world in purchase for a friend is gain.'
So sung he (angels hear that angel sing!
Angels from friendship gather half their joy)
So sung Philander, as his friend went round
In the rich ichor in the generous blood
Of Bacchus, purple god of joyous wit,
A brow solute, and ever-laughing eye.
He drank long health and virtue to his friend;
His friend! who warmed him more, who more inspired.
Friendship's the wine of life; but friendship new
(Not such was his) is neither strong nor pure.
O! for the bright complexion, cordial warmth,
And elevating spirit of a friend,
For twenty summers ripening by my side;
All feculence of falsehood long thrown down,
All social virtues rising in his soul,
As crystal clear, and smiling as they rise!
Here nectar flows; it sparkles in our sight:
Rich to the taste, and genuine from the heart.
High-flavoured bliss for gods! on earth how rare!
On earth how lost!—Philander is no more.
Thinkest thou the theme intoxicates my song?
Am I too warm?—Too warm I can not be.
I loved him much, but now I love him more.
Like birds, whose beauties languish, half-concealed,
Till, mounted on the wing, their glossy plumes
Expanded, shine with azure, green, and gold;
How blessings brighten as they take their flight!
His flight Philander took, his upward flight,
If ever soul ascended. Had he dropped,
(That eagle genius!) O had he let fall
One feather as he flew, I then had wrote
What friends might flatter, prudent foes forbear,
Rivals scarce damn, and Zoilus reprieve.
Yet what I can I must: it were profane
To quench a glory lighted at the skies,
And cast in shadows his illustrious close.
Strange! the theme most affecting, most sublime
Momentous most to man, should sleep unsung!
And yet it sleeps, by genius unawaked,
Painim or Christian, to the blush of Wit.
Man's highest triumph, man's profoundest fall,
The death-bed of the just! is yet undrawn

By mortal hand; it merits a divine;
Angels should paint it, angels ever there,
There on a post of honour and of joy.
Dare I presume, then? but Philander bids,
And glory tempts, and inclination calls.
Yet am I struck, as struck the soul beneath
Aërial groves impenetrable gloom,
Or in some mighty ruin's solemn shade,
Or gazing, by pale lamps, on high-born dust
In vaults, thin courts of poor unflattered kings,
Or at the midnight altar's hallowed flame.
It is religion to proceed: I pause—
And enter, awed, the temple of my theme.
Is it his death-bed? No; it is his shrine:
Behold him there just rising to a god.
The chamber where the good man meets his fate
Is privileged beyond the common walk
Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of Heaven.
Fly, ye profane! if not, draw near with awe,
Receive the blessing, and adore the chance
That threw in this Bethesda your disease:
If unrestored by this, despair your cure;
For here resistless Demonstration dwells.
A death-bed's a detector of the heart!
Here tired Dissimulation drops her mask
Through Life's grimace, that mistress of the scene!
Here real and apparent are the same,
You see the man, you see his hold on Heaven,
If sound his virtue, as Philander's sound.
Heaven waits not the last moment; owns her friends
On this side death, and points them out to men;
A lecture silent, but of sovereign power!
To Vice confusion, and to Virtue peace.
Whatever farce the boastful hero plays,
Virtue alone has majesty in death;
And greater still, the more the tyrant frowns.
Philander! he severely frowned on thee.
'No warning given! unceremonious fate!
A sudden rush from life's meridian joys!
A wrench from all we love! from all we are!
A restless bed of pain! a plunge opaque
Beyond conjecture! feeble Nature's dread!
Strong Reason's shudder, at the dark unknown!
A sun extinguish'd! a just-opening grave!
And, oh! the last, last; what? (can words express,
Thought reach it?) the last—silence of a friend!'
Where are those horrors, that amazement, where
This hideous group of ills, which singly shock,
Demand from man.—I thought him man, till now.
Through Nature's wreck, through vanquish'd agonies,
(Like the stars struggling through this midnight gloom)
What gleams of joy? what more than human peace?
Where the frail mortal, the poor abject worm?
No, not in death the mortal to be found.
His conduct is a legacy for all,
Richer than Mammon's for his single heir.
His comforters he comforts; great in ruin
With unreluctant grandeur gives, not yields
His soul sublime, and closes with his fate.
How our hearts burnt within us at the scene;
Whence this brave bound o'er limits fix'd to man?
His God sustains him in his final hour!
His final hour brings glory to his God!
Man's glory Heaven vouchsafes to call her own.
We gaze, we weep; mixed tears of grief and joy!
Amazement strikes: devotion bursts to flame:
Christians adore! and infidels believe.
As some tall tower, or lofty mountain's brow,
Detains the sun, illustrious, from its height,
While rising vapours, and descending shades,
With damps and darkness, drown the spacious vale;
Undampt by doubt, undarken'd by despair,
Philander thus augustly rears his head,
At that black hour which general horror sheds
On the low level of the inglorious throng:
Sweet peace, and heavenly hope, and humble joy,
Divinely beam on his exalted soul;
Destruction gild, and crown him for the skies,
With incommunicable lustre bright.

NIGHT III.

NARCISSA.

To Her Grace the Duchess of Portland.

Ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere manes.—Virg.

From dreams, where thought in Fancy's maze runs mad,
To reason, that heaven-lighted lamp in man,
Once more I wake; and at the destined hour,
Punctual as lovers to the moment sworn,
I keep my assignation with my wo.
O! lost to virtue, lost to manly thought,
Lost to the noble sallies of the soul;
Who think it solitude to be alone.
Communion sweet! communion large and high!
Our reason, guardian-angel, and our God!
Then nearest these, when others most remote;
And all, ere long, shall be remote but these;
How dreadful, then, to meet them all alone,
A stranger! unacknowledged, unapprov'd!
Now woo them, wed them, bind them to thy breast:
To win thy wish creation has no more:
Or if we wish a fourth, it is a friend.——
But friends how mortal! dangerous the desire.
Take Phœbus to yourselves, ye basking bards!
Inebriate at fair fortune's fountain head,
And reeling through the wilderness of joy,
Where Sense runs savage, broke from Reason's chain,
And sings false peace, till smother'd by the pall.
My fortune is unlike, unlike my song,
Unlike the deity my song invokes.

I to day's soft-ey'd sister pay my court,
(Endymion's rival) and her aid implore,
Now first implor'd in succour to the Muse.
Thou who didst lately borrow Cynthia's* form,
And modestly forego thine own: O thou
Who didst thyself at midnight hours inspire!
Say, why not Cynthia, patroness of song?
As thou her crescent, she thy character
Assumes; still more a goddess by the change.
Are there demurring wits who dare dispute
This revolution in the world inspired?
Ye train Pierian! to the lunar sphere,
In silent hour, address your ardent call
For aid immortal, less her brother's right.
She with the spheres harmonious, nightly leads
The mazy dance, and hears their matchless strain,
A strain for gods, denied to mortal ear.
Transmit it heard, thou silver queen of Heaven!
What title or what name endears thee most?
Cynthia! Cyllene! Phœbe—or dost hear
With higher gust, fair Portland of the skies?
Is that the soft enchantment calls thee down,
More powerful than of old Circean charm?
Come, but from heavenly banquets with thee bring
The soul of song, and whisper in my ear
The theft divine; or in propitious dreams
(For dreams are thine) transfuse it through the breast
Of thy first votary, but not thy last,
If like thy namesake, thou art ever kind.
And kind thou wilt be, kind on such a theme;
A theme so like thee, a quite lunar theme,
Soft, modest, melancholy, female, fair!
A theme that rose all pale, and told my soul
'Twas night; on her fond hopes perpetual night;
A night which struck a damp, a deadlier damp
Than that which smote me from Philander's tomb!
Narcissa follows ere his tomb is closed.
Woes cluster; rare are solitary woes;
They love a train; they tread each other's heel;
Her death invades his mournful right, and claims
The grief that started from my lids for him;
Seizes the faithless, alienated tear,
Or shares it ere it falls. So frequent Death,
Sorrow he more than causes, he confounds;
For human sighs his rival strokes contend,
And make distress distraction. Oh, Philander!
What was thy fate? a double fate to me?
Portent and plain! a menace and a blow!
Like the black raven hovering o'er my peace,
Not less a bird of omen than of prey.
It called Narcissa long before her hour;
It called her tender soul by break of bliss,
From the first blossom, from the buds of joy;
Those few our noxious fate unblasted leaves,
In this inclement clime of human life.
Sweet harmonist! and beautiful as sweet!
And young as beautiful! and soft as young!
And gay as soft! and innocent as gay!
And happy (if aught happy here) as good!
For Fortune, fond, had built her nest on high.
Like birds quite exquisite of note and plume,
Transfixed by Fate (who loves a lofty mark)
How from the summit of the grove she fell,
And left it unharmonious! all its charm
Extinguish'd in the wonders of her song!
Her song still vibrates in my ravished ear.
Still melting there, and with voluptuous pain
(O to forget her!) thrilling through my heart.
Song, beauty, youth, love, virtue, joy; this group
Of bright ideas, flowers of Paradise,
As yet unforfeit! in one blaze we bind,
Kneel, and present it to the skies, as all
We guess of Heaven! and these were all her own;
And she was mine; and I was—was—most blest—
Gay title of the deepest misery!
As bodies grow more ponderous robbed of life,
Good lost, weighs more in grief, than gained in joy.
Like blossomed trees o'erturn'd by vernal storm,
Lovely in death the beauteous ruin lay;
And if in death still lovely, lovelier there;
Far lovelier; pity swells the tide of love.
And will not the severe excuse a sign?
Scorn the proud man that is ashamed to weep.
Our tears indulged indeed deserve our shame.
Ye that e'er lost an angel, pity me!
Soon as the lustre languished in her eye,
Dawning a dimmer day on human sight,
And on her cheek, the residence of Spring,
Pale Omen sat, and scattered fears around
On all that saw, (and who would cease to gaze
That once had seen?) with haste, parental haste,
I flew, I snatched her from the rigid North,
Her native bed, on which bleak Boreas blew,
And bore her nearer to the sun; the sun
(As if the sun could envy) checked his beam,
Denied his wonted succour; nor with more
Regret beheld her drooping than the bells
Of lilies; fairest lilies not so fair.
Queen lilies! and ye painted populace
Who dwell in fields, and lead ambrosial lives!
In morn and evening dew your beauties bathe,
And drink the sun, which gives your cheeks to glow,
And outblush (mine excepted) every fair;
You gladlier grew, ambitious of her hand,
Which often cropt your odours, incense meet
To thought so pure! Ye lovely fugitives!
Coëval race with man! for man you smile;
Why not smile at him too? You share, indeed,
His sudden pass; but not his constant pain.
So man is made, nought ministers delight
But what his glowing passions can engage;
And glowing passions, bent on aught below,
Must, soon or late, with anguish turn the scale,

* At the Duke of Norfolk's masquerade.

And anguish after rapture, how severe!
Rapture? bold man! who tempts the wrath divine,
By plucking fruit denied to mortal taste,
While here presuming on the rights of Heaven.
For transport dost thou call on every hour,
Lorenzo? at thy friend's expense be wise:
Lean not on earth; 'twill pierce thee to the heart;
A broken reed at best; but oft a spear;
On its sharp point Peace bleeds, and Hope expires.
Turn, hopeless thought! turn from her.—Thought repelled,
Resenting rallies, and wakes every wo.
Snatched ere thy prime! and in thy bridal hour!
And when kind Fortune, with thy lover, smiled!
And when high-flavoured thy fresh-opening joys!
And when blind man pronounced thy bliss complete!
And on a foreign shore where strangers wept!
Strangers to thee, and, more surprising still,
Strangers to kindness, wept. Their eyes let fall
Inhuman tears; strange tears! that trickled down
From marble hearts! obdurate tenderness!
A tenderness that called them more severe,
In spite of Nature's soft persuasion steeled:
While Nature melted, Superstition raved;
That mourned the dead, and this denied a grave.
Their sighs incensed; sighs foreign to the will!
Their will the tiger-sucked outraged the storm:
For, oh! the cursed ungodliness of Zeal!
While sinful flesh relented, spirit nursed
In blind Infallibility's embrace,
The sainted spirit petrified the breast:
Denied the charity of dust to spread
O'er dust! a charity their dogs enjoy.
What could I do? what succour? what resource?
With pious sacrilege a grave I stole;
With impious piety that grave I wronged;
Short in my duty, coward in my grief!
More like her murderer than friend, I crept
With soft-suspended step, and, muffled deep
In midnight darkness, whispered my last sigh.
I whispered what should echo through their realms,
Nor writ her name, whose tomb should pierce the skies.
Presumptuous fear! how durst I dread her foes,
While Naure's loudest dictates I obeyed?
Pardon necessity, blest shade! of grief
And indignation rival bursts I poured;
Half-execration mingled with my prayer;
Kindled at man, while I his God adored:
Sore grudged the savage land her sacred dust;
Stamped the curst soil; and with humanity
(Denied Narcissa) wished them all a grave.
Glows my resentment into guilt? what guilt
Can equal violations of the dead?
The dead how sacred! sacred is the dust
Of this heaven-laboured form, erect, divine!
This heaven assumed, majestic, robe of earth
He deigned to wear, who hung the vast expanse
With azure bright, and clothed the sun in gold.
When every passion sleeps that can offend;
When strikes us every motive that can melt;
When man can wreak his rancour uncontrolled,
That strongest curb on insult and ill-will;
Then! spleen to dust? the dust of innocence?
An angel's dust!—This Lucifer transcends;
When he contended for the patriarch's bones,
'Twas not the strife of malice, but of pride;
The strife of pontiff pride, not pontiff gall.
Far less than this is shocking in a race
Most wretched, but from streams of mutual love,
And uncreated, but for love divine;
And but for love divine this moment lost,
By Fate resorbed, and sunk in endless night.
Man hard of heart to man! of horrid things
Most horrid! mid stupendous highly strange!
Yet oft his courtesies are smoother wrongs;
Pride brandishes the favours he confers,
And contumelious his humanity:
What then his vengeance? Hear it not, ye Stars!
And thou, pale Moon! turn paler at the sound,
Man is to man the sorest, surest ill.
A previous blast foretells the rising storm;
O'erwhelming turrets threaten, ere they fall;
Volcanos bellow, ere they disembogue;
Earth trembles, ere her yawning jaws devour;
And smoke betrays the wide-consuming fire:
Ruin from man is most concealed when near,
And sends the dreadful tidings in the blow.
Is this the flight of Fancy? would it were!
Heaven's Sovereign saves all beings, but Himself,
That hideous sight, a naked human heart.
Fired is the Muse? and let the Muse be fired:
Who not inflamed, when what he speaks he feels,
And in the nerve most tender, in his friends;
Shame to mankind! Philander had his foes;
He felt the truths I sing, and I in him:
But he nor I feel more. Past ills, Narcissa!
Are sunk in thee, thou recent wound of heart,
Which bleeds with other cares, with other pangs:
Pangs numerous as the numerous ills that swarmed
O'er thy distinguished fate, and clustering there,
Thick as the locust on the land of Nile,
Made death more deadly, and more dark the grave.
Reflect (if not forgot my touching tale)
How was each circumstance with aspics armed?
An aspic each, and all an hydra-wo.
What strong Herculean virtue could suffice?—
Or is it virtue to be conquered here?
This hoary cheek a train of tears bedews,
And each tear mourns its own distinct distress,
And each distress, distinctly mourn'd, demands
Of grief still more, as heightened by the whole.
A grief like this proprietors excludes:
Not friends alone such obsequies deplore;
They make mankind the mourner; carry signs
Far as the fatal Fame can wing her way,

And turn the gayest thought of gayest age
Down their right channel, through the vale of death.
The vale of death? that hush'd Cimmerian vale,
Where Darkness, brooding o'er unfinished fates,
With raven wing incumbent, waits the day
(Dread day!) that interdicts all future change;
That subterranean world, that land of ruin!
Fit walk, Lorenzo! for proud human thought!
There let my thoughts expatiate, and explore
Balsamic truths and healing sentiments,
Of all most wanted, and most welcome, here.
For gay Lorenzo's sake, and for thy own,
My soul! 'The fruits of dying friends survey;
Expose the vain of life; weigh life and death;
Give Death his eulogy; thy fear subdued;
And labour that first palm of noble minds,
A manly scorn of terror from the tomb.'
This harvest reap from thy Narcissa's grave.
As poets feigned from Ajax' streaming blood
Arose, with grief inscribed, a mournful flower,
Let wisdom blossom from my mortal wound.
And first, of dying friends; what fruit from these?
It brings us more than triple aid; an aid
To chase our thoughtlessness, fear, pride, and guilt.
Our dying friends come o'er us like a cloud,
To damp our brainless ardours, and abate
That glare of light, which often blinds the wise.
Our dying friends are pioneers, to smooth
Our rugged pass to death; to break those bars
Of terror and abhorrence Nature throws
Cross our obstructed way, and thus to make
Welcome, as safe, our port from every storm.
Each friend by Fate snatched from us is a plume
Plucked from the wing of human vanity,
Which makes us stoop from our aërial heights,
And damped with omen of our own decease,
On drooping pinions of ambition lowered,
Just skim earth's surface ere we break it up,
O'er putrid earth to scratch a little dust,
And save the world a nuisance. Smitten friends
Are angels sent on errands full of love;
For us they languish, and for us they die:
And shall they languish, shall they die, in vain?
Ungrateful, shall we grieve their hovering shades,
Which wait the revolution in our hearts?
Shall we disdain their silent, soft, address,
Their posthumous advice, and pious prayer?
Senseless as herds that graze their hallowed graves,
Tread under foot their agonies and groans,
Frustrate their anguish, and destroy their deaths?
Lorenzo! no; the thought of death indulge;
Give it its wholesome empire! let it reign,
That kind chastiser of thy soul, in joy!
Its reign will spread thy glorious conquests far,
And still the tumults of thy ruffled breast.
Auspicious era! golden days, begin!
The thought of death shall, like a god, inspire.
And why not think on death? Is life the theme
Of every thought? and wish of every hour?
And song of every joy? surprising truth!
The beaten spaniel's fondness not so strange.
To wave the numerous ills that seize on life
As their own property, their lawful prey;
Ere man has measured half his weary stage,
His luxuries have left him no reserve,
No maiden relishes, unbroached delights:
On cold-served repetitions he subsists,
And in the tasteless present chews the past;
Disgusted chews, and scarce can swallow down.
Like lavish ancestors, his earlier years
Have disinherited his future hours,
Which starve on orts, and glean their former field.
Live ever here, Lorenzo!—shocking thought!
So shocking! they who wish disown it too;
Disown from shame, what they from folly crave.
Live ever in the womb, nor see the light?
For what, live ever here?—with labouring step
To tread our former footsteps? pace the round
Eternal? to climb life's worn heavy wheel,
Which draws up nothing new? to beat, and beat,
The beaten track? to bid each wretched day
The former mock? to surfeit on the same,
And yawn our joys? or thank a misery
For change though sad! to see what we have seen?
Hear, till unheard, the same old slabbered tale?
To taste the tasted, and at each return
Less tasteful? o'er our palates to decant
Another vintage? strain a flatter year
Through loaded vessels, and a laxer tone?
Crazy machines to grind earth's wasted fruits!
Ill ground, and worse concocted! load, not life!
The rational foul kennels of excess!
Still-streaming thoroughfares of dull debauch!
Trembling each gulp, lest Death should snatch the bowl.
Such of our fine ones is the wish refined!
So would they have it: elegant desire!
Why not invite the bellowing stalls and wilds?
But such examples might their riot awe.
Through want of virtue, that is, want of thought,
(Though on bright thought they father all their flights)
To what are they reduced? to love and hate
The same vain world; to censure and espouse
This painted shrew of life, who calls them fool
Each moment of each day; to flatter bad,
Through dread of worse; to cling to this rude rock,
Barren to them of good, and sharp with ills,
And hourly blackened with impending storms,
And infamous for wrecks of human hope—
Scared at the gloomy gulf that yawns beneath.
Such are their triumphs! such their pangs of joy:
'Tis time, high time, to shift this dismal scene.

This hugged, this hideous state, what art can cure?
One only, but that one what all may reach:
Virtue—she, wonder-working goddess! charms
That rock to bloom, and tames the painted shrew;
And, what will more surprise, Lorenzo! gives
To life's sick, nauseous iteration, change;
And straitens Nature's circle to a line.
Believ'st thou this, Lorenzo? lend an ear,
A patient ear; thou'lt blush to disbelieve.
A languid, leaden iteration reigns,
And ever must, o'er those whose joys are joys
Of sight, smell, taste. The cuckow-seasons sing
The same dull note to such as nothing prize
But what those seasons, from the teeming earth,
To doting sense indulge: but nobler minds,
Which relish fruits unripened by the sun,
Make their days various; various as the dyes
On the dove's neck, which wanton in his rays.
On minds of dove-like innocence possessed,
On lightened minds, that bask in virtue's beams,
Nothing hangs tedious, nothing old revolves
In that for which they long, for which they live.
Their glorious efforts, winged with heavenly hope,
Each rising morning sees still higher rise;
Each bounteous dawn its novelty presents
To worth maturing, new strength, lustre, fame;
While Nature's circle, like a chariot-wheel
Rolling beneath their elevated aims,
Makes their fair prospect fairer every hour,
Advancing virtue in a line to bliss;
Virtue, which Christian motives best inspire;
And bliss, which Christian schemes alone ensue!
And shall we then, for virtue's sake, commence
Apostates, and turn infidels for joy?
A truth it is few doubt, but fewer trust,
'He sins against this life who slights the next.'
What is this life? how few their favourite know?
Fond in the dark, and blind in our embrace,
By passionately loving life, we make
Loved life unlovely, hugging her to death.
We give to time eternity's regard,
And dreaming, take our passage for our port.
Life has no value as an end, but means;
An end deplorable! a means divine!
When 'tis our all, 'tis nothing; worse than nought;
A nest of pains; when held as nothing, much.
Like some fair humorists, life is most enjoyed
When courted least; most worth when dis-
esteemed;
Then 'tis the seat of comfort, rich in peace;
In prospect richer far; important! awful!
Not to be mentioned but with shouts of praise!
Not to be thought on but with tides of joy!
The mighty basis of eternal bliss!
Where now the barren rock? the painted shrew?
Where now, Lorenzo, life's eternal round?
Have I not made my triple promise good?
Vain is the world, but only to the vain.
To what compare we then this varying scene,
Whose worth, ambiguous, rises and declines?
Waxes and wanes? (in all propitious Night
Assists me here) compare it to the moon;
Dark in herself, and indigent, but rich
In borrowed lustre from a higher sphere.
When gross guilt interposes, labouring earth,
O'ershadow'd, mourns a deep eclipse of joy;
Her joys, at brightest, pallid to that font
Of full effulgent glory whence they flow.
Nor is that glory distant. Oh, Lorenzo!
A good man and an angel! these between
How thin the barrier! what divides their fate?
Perhaps a moment, or perhaps a year;
Or if an age it is a moment still;
A moment, or eternity's forgot.
Then be what once they were who now are gods
Be what Philander was, and claim the skies.
Starts timid Nature at the gloomy pass?
The soft transition call it, and be cheered:
Such it is often, and why not to thee?
To hope the best is pious, brave, and wise,
And may itself procure what it presumes.
Life is much flattered, Death is much traduced;
Compare the rivals, and the kinder crown.
'Strange competition!'—True, Lorenzo! strange
So little life can cast into the scale.
Life makes the soul dependent on the dust,
Death gives her wings to mount above the spheres.
Through chinks, stiled organs, dim life peeps at
light;
Death bursts the involving cloud, and all is day:
All eye, all ear, the disembodied power.
Death has feigned evils nature shall not feel;
Life, ills substantial wisdom can not shun.
Is not the mighty mind, that sun of Heaven:
By tyrant life dethroned, imprisoned, pained?
By Death enlarged, ennobled, deified?
Death but entombs the body, life the soul.
'Is Death then guiltless? How he marks his way
With dreadful waste of what deserves to shine!
Art, genius, fortune, elevated power!
With various lustres these light up the world,
Which Death puts out, and darkens human race.
I grant, Lorenzo! this indictment just:
The sage, peer, potentate, king, conqueror!
Death humbles these; more barbarous life, the
man.
Life is the triumph of our mouldering clay;
Death of the spirit infinite! divine!
Death has no dread but what frail life imparts,
Nor life true joy but what kind death improves.
No bliss has life to boast, till death can give
Far greater. Life's a debtor to the grave;
Dark lattice! letting in ethereal day.
Lorenzo! blush at fondness for a life
Which sends celestial souls on errands vile,
To cater for the sense, and serve at boards
Where every ranger of the wilds, perhaps
Each reptile, justly claims our upper-hand.

Luxurious feast! a soul, a soul immortal,
In all the dainties of a brute bemired!
Lorenzo! blush at terror for a death
Which gives thee to repose in festive bowers,
Where nectars sparkle, angels minister,
And more than angels share, and raise and crown,
And eternize, the birth, bloom, bursts of bliss.
What need I more?—O Death! the palm is thine.
Then welcome, Death! thy dreaded harbingers,
Age and disease; Disease, though long my guest,
That plucks my nerves, those tender strings of life,
Which, plucked a little more, will toll the bell
That calls my few friends to my funeral;
Where feeble Nature drops, perhaps, a tear,
While Reason and Religion, better taught,
Congratulate the dead, and crown his tomb
With wreath triumphant. Death is victory!
It binds in chains the raging ills of life:
Lust and Ambition, Wrath and Avarice,
Dragged at his chariot-wheel, applaud his power.
That ills corrosive, cares importunate,
Are not immortal too, O Death! is thine.
Our day of dissolution!—name it right,
'Tis our great pay-day; 'tis our harvest, rich
And ripe. What though the sickle, sometimes keen,
Just scars us as we reap the golden grain!
More than thy balm, O Gilead! heals the wound.
Birth's feeble cry, and Death's deep dismal groan,
Are slender tributes low-taxed Nature pays
For mighty gain: the gain of each a life!
But, O! the last the former so transcends,
Life dies, compared; Life lives beyond the grave.
And feel I, Death! no joy from thought of thee?
Death! the great counsellor, who man inspires
With every nobler thought and fairer deed!
Death! the deliverer, who rescues man!
Death! the rewarder, who the rescued crowns!
Death! that absolves my birth, a curse without it!
Rich Death! that realizes all my cares,
Toils, virtues, hopes; without it a chimera;
Death! of all pain the period, not of joy;
Joy's source and subject still subsist unhurt;
One in my soul, and one in her great sire,
Though the four winds were warring for my dust:
Yes, and from winds and waves, and central night,
Though prisoned there, my dust, too, I reclaim,
(To dust when drop proud Nature's proudest spheres)
And live entire. Death is the crown of life!
Were death denied, poor man would live in vain:
Were death denied, to live would not be life:
Were death denied, even fools would wish to die.
Death wounds to cure; we fall, we rise, we reign!
Spring from our fetters, fasten in the skies,
Where blooming Eden withers in our sight.
Death gives us more than was in Eden lost:
This king of terrors is the prince of peace.
When shall I die to vanity, pain, death?
When shall I die?—when shall I live for ever?

NIGHT IV.

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

CONTAINING OUR ONLY CURE FOR THE FEAR OF DEATH, AND PROPER SENTIMENTS OF HEART ON THAT INESTIMABLE BLESSING.

To the Hon. Mr. Yorke.

A much-indebted Muse, O Yorke! intrudes
Amid the smiles of fortune and of youth,
Thine ear is patient of a serious song.
How deep implanted in the breast of man
The dread of death? I sing its sovereign cure.
Why start at Death? where is he? Death arrived,
Is past; not come, or gone: he's never here.
Ere hope, sensation fails. Black-boding man
Receives, not suffers, Death's tremendous blow.
The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave;
The deep damp vault, the darkness, and the worm;
These are the bugbears of a winter's eve,
The terrors of the living, not the dead;
Imagination's fool, and Error's wretch.
Man makes a death which Nature never made,
Then on the point of his own fancy falls,
And feels a thousand deaths in fearing one.
But were Death frightful, what has age to fear?
If prudent, age should meet the friendly foe,
And shelter in his hospitable gloom.
I scarce can meet a monument but holds
My younger; every date cries—'Come away.'
And what recalls me? look the world around,
And tell me what. The wisest can not tell.
Should any born of woman give his thought
Full range, on just Dislike's unbounded field;
Of things the vanity, of men the flaws;
Flaws in the best; the many, flaw all o'er;
As leopards spotted, or as Ethiops dark;
Vivacious ill; good dying immature;
(How immature Narcissa's marble tells)
And at its death bequeathing endless pain;
His heart, though bold, would sicken at the sight,
And spend itself in sighs for future scenes.
But grant to life (and just it is to grant
To lucky life) some perquisites of joy;
A time there is when, like a thrice-told tale,
Long-rifled life of sweet can yield no more,
But from our comment on the comedy;
Pleasing reflections on parts well-sustained,
Or purposed emendations where we failed,
Or hopes of plaudits from our candid Judge,
When, on their exit, souls are bid unrobe,
Toss Fortune back her tinsel and her plume,
And drop this mask of flesh behind the scene.
With me that time is come; my world is dead;

A new world rises, and new manners reign.
Foreign comedians, a spruce band! arrive,
To push me from the scene, or hiss me there.
What a pert race starts up! the strangers gaze,
And I at them; my neighbour is unknown;
Nor that the worst. Ah me! the dire effect
Of loitering here, of death defrauded long.
Of old so gracious (and let that suffice)
My very master knows me not.——
Shall I dare say peculiar is my fate?
I've been so long remembered, I'm forgot.
An object ever pressing dims the sight,
And hides behind its ardour to be seen.
When in his courtiers' ears I pour my plaint,
They drink it as the nectar of the great,
And squeeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow.
Refusal! canst thou wear a smoother form?
Indulge me, nor conceive I drop my theme.
Who cheapens life abates the fear of death.
Twice told the period spent on stubborn Troy,
Court-favour, yet untaken, I besiege;
Ambition's ill-judged effort to be rich.
Alas! ambition makes my little less,
Embittering the possessed. Why wish for more?
Wishing, of all employments, is the worst;
Philosophy's reverse, and health's decay!
Were I as plump as stalled Theology,
Wishing would waste me to this shade again.
Were I as wealthy as a South-sea dream,
Wishing is an expedient to be poor.
Wishing, that constant hectic of a fool,
Caught at a court, purged off by purer air
And simpler diet, gifts of rural life!
Blest be that hand divine, which gently laid
My heart at rest, beneath this humble shed.
The world's a stately bark, on dangerous seas
With pleasure seen, but boarded at our peril;
Here on a single plank, thrown safe ashore,
I hear the tumult of the distant throng,
As that of seas remote, or dying storms,
And meditate on scenes more silent still,
Pursue my theme, and fight the fear of death.
Here, like a shepherd gazing from his hut,
Touching his reed, or leaning on his staff,
Eager Ambition's fiery chase I see;
I see the circling hunt of noisy men
Burst law's inclosure, leap the mounds of right,
Pursuing and pursued, each other's prey;
As wolves for rapine, as the fox for wiles,
Till Death, that mighty hunter, earth's them all.
Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?
What though we wade in wealth, or soar in fame?
Earth's highest station ends in, 'Here he lies;'
And 'dust to dust' concludes her noblest song.
If this song lives, posterity shall know
One, though in Britain born, with courtiers bred,
Who thought even gold might come a day too late;
Nor on his subtle death-bed planned his scheme
For future vacancies in church or state,
Some avocation deeming it—to die;
Unbit by rage canine of dying rich,
Guilt's blunder! and the loudest laugh of Hell.
O my coëvals! remnants of yourselves!
Poor human ruins, tottering o'er the grave!
Shall we, shall aged men, like aged trees,
Strike deeper their vile root, and closer cling,
Still more enamoured of this wretched soil?
Shall our pale withered hands be still stretched out,
Trembling, at once with eagerness and age?
With avarice and convulsions, grasping hard
Grasping at air! for what has earth beside?
Man wants but little, nor that little long:
How soon must he resign his very dust,
Which frugal Nature lent him for an hour!
Years unexperienced rush on numerous ills:
And soon as man, expert from time, has found
The key of life, it opes the gates of death.
When in this vale of years I backward look,
And miss such numbers, numbers too, of such
Firmer in health, and greener in their age,
And stricter on their guard, and fitter far
To play life's subtle game, I scarce believe
I still survive. And am I fond of life,
Who scarce can think it possible I live?
Alive by miracle! or, what is next,
Alive by Mead! if I am still alive,
Who long have buried what gives life to live,
Firmness of nerve, and energy of thought.
Life's lee is not more shallow than impure
And vapid: Sense and Reason show the door,
Call for my bier, and point me to the dust.
O thou great Arbiter of life and death!
Nature's immortal, immaterial Sun!
Whose all-prolific beam late called me forth
From darkness, teeming darkness, where I lay
The worm's inferior; and, in rank, beneath
The dust I tread on; high to bear my brow,
To drink the spirit of the golden day,
And triumph in existence; and could'st know
No motive but my bliss, and hast ordained
A rise in blessing! with the patriarch's joy,
Thy call I follow to the land unknown;
I trust in thee, and know in whom I trust:
Or life or death is equal; neither weighs;
All weight in this—O let me live to Thee!
Though Nature's terrors, thus, may be repress,
Still frowns grim Death; guilt points the tyrant's spear.
And whence all human guilt?—From Death forgot.
Ah me! too long I set at nought the swarm
Of friendly warnings which around me flew,
And smiled unsmitten. Small my cause to smile!
Death's admonitions, like shafts upward shot,
More dreadful by delay; the longer ere
They strike our hearts, the deeper is their wound:
O think how deep Lorenzo! here it stings;

Who can appease its anguish? How it burns!
What hand the barbed, envenomed thought can draw?
What healing hand can pour the balm of peace,
And turn my sight undaunted on the tomb?
With joy,—with grief, that healing hand I see:
Ah! too conspicuous! it is fixed on high.
On high? what means my frenzy? I blaspheme:
Alas! how low? how far beneath the skies?
The skies it formed, and now it bleeds for me—
But bleeds the balm I want—yet still it bleeds;
Draw the dire steel—ah, no! the dreadful blessing
What heart or can sustain or dares forego?
There hangs all human hope; that nail supports
The falling universe: that gone, we drop,
Horror receives us, and the dismal wish
Creation had been smothered in her birth—
Darkness his curtain, and his bed the dust,
When stars and suns are dust beneath his throne;
In Heaven itself can such indulgence dwell?
O what a groan was there! a groan not his:
He seized our dreadful right, the load sustained,
And heaved the mountain from a guilty world.
A thousand worlds so bought, were bought too dear;
Sensations new in angels' bosoms rise,
Suspend their song, and make a pause in bliss.
O for their song to reach my lofty theme!
Inspire me, Night! with all thy tuneful spheres,
Whilst I with seraphs share seraphic themes,
And show to men the dignity of man,
Lest I blaspheme my subject with my song.
Shall pagan pages glow celestial flame,
And Christian languish? On our hearts, not heads,
Falls the foul infamy. My heart! awake:
What can awake thee, unawaked by this,
'Expended Deity on human weal?'
Feel the great truths which burst the tenfold night
Of Heathen error with a golden flood
Of endless day. To feel is to be fired;
And to believe, Lorenzo! is to feel.
Thou most indulgent, most tremendous Power!
Still more tremendous for thy wondrous love;
That arms with awe more awful thy commands,
And foul transgression dips in sevenfold guilt;
How our hearts tremble at thy love immense!
In love immense, inviolably just!
Thou, rather than thy justice should be stained,
Did stain the Cross; and, work of wonders far
The greatest, that thy dearest far might bleed.
Bold thought! shall I dare speak it or repress?
Should man more execrate or boast the guilt
Which roused such vengeance? which such love inflamed?
O'er guilt (how mountainous!) with outstretched arms
Stern Justice and soft-smiling Love, embrace,
Supporting, in full majesty, thy throne,
When seemed its majesty to need support;
Or that, or man, inevitably lost:
What but the fathomless of thought divine
Could labour such expedient from despair,
And rescue both? Both rescue! both exalt!
O how are both exalted by the deed!
The wondrous deed! or shall I call it more?
A wonder in Omnipotence itself!
A mystery no less to gods than men!
Not thus our infidels the Eternal draw,
A God all-o'er consummate, absolute,
Full orbed, in his whole round of rays complete:
They set at odds Heaven's jarring attributes,
And with one excellence another wound;
Maim Heaven's perfection, break its equal beams,
Bid mercy triumph over—God himself,
Undeified by their opprobrious praise.
A God all mercy is a God unjust.
Ye brainless wits! ye baptized infidels!
Ye worse for mending! washed to fouler stains!
The ransom was paid down; the fund of Heaven,
Heaven's inexhaustible, exhausted fund,
Amazing and amazed, poured forth the price,
All price beyond: though curious to compute,
Archangels failed to cast the mighty sum:
Its value vast, ungrasped by minds create,
For ever hides and glows in the Supreme.
And was the ransom paid? It was, and paid
(What can exalt the bounty more?) for you!
The sun beheld it.—No, the shocking scene
Drove back his chariot: midnight veiled his face:
Not such as this, not such as nature makes;
A midnight Nature shuddered to behold;
A midnight new! a dread eclipse (without
Opposing spheres) from her Creator's frown!
Sun! didst thou fly thy maker's pain? or start
At that enormous load of human guilt
Which bowed his blessed head, o'erwhelmed his cross,
Made groan the centre, burst earth's marble womb
With pangs, strange pangs! delivered of her dead?
Hell howled; and Heaven that hour let fall a tear;
Heaven wept, that men might smile! Heaven bled that man
Might never die!——
And is devotion virtue? 'tis compelled.
What heart of stone but glows at thoughts like these?
Such contemplations mount us, and should mount
The mind still higher, nor ever glance on man
Unraptured, uninflamed.—Where rolled my thoughts
To rest from wonders? other wonders rise,
And strike where'er they roll: my soul is caught:
Heaven's sovereign blessing, clustering from the cross,
Rush on her, in a throng, and close her round,
The prisoner of amaze!—In his blest life
I see the path, and in his death the price,
And in his great ascent the proof supreme

Of immortality.—And did he rise?—
Hear, O ye Nations! hear it, O ye Dead!
He rose! he rose! he burst the bars of death.
Lift up your heads, ye everlasting Gates!
And give the King of glory to come in.
Who is the King of glory? he who left
His throne of glory for the pang of death.
Lift up your heads, ye everlasting Gates!
And give the King of glory to come in.
Who is the King of glory? he who slew
The ravenous foe that gorged all human race!
The King of glory He, whose glory filled
Heaven with amazement at his love to man,
And with divine complacency beheld
Powers most illumined, wildered in the theme.
The theme, the joy, how then shall man sustain?
Oh, the burst gates! crushed sting! demolished throne!
Last gasp of vanquished Death! Shout, earth and Heaven,
This sum of good to man! whose nature then
Took wing, and mounted with him from the tomb.
Then, then, I rose; then first Humanity
Triumphant past the crystal ports of light,
(Stupendous guest!) and seized eternal youth,
Seized in our name. E'er since 'tis blasphemous
To call man mortal. Man's mortality
Was then transferred to death; and Heaven's duration
Unalienably sealed to this frail frame,
This child of dust.—Man, all-immortal! hail!
Hail, Heaven! All lavish of strange gifts to man!
Thine all the glory, man's the boundless bliss!
Where am I rapt by this triumphant theme,
On Christian joys exulting wing, above
The Aonian mount!—Alas! small cause for joy!
What, if to pain immortal? if extent
Of being, to preclude a close of wo?
Where, then, my boast of immortality?
I boast it still, though covered o'er with guilt:
For guilt, not innocence, his life he poured;
'Tis guilt alone can justify his death;
Nor that, unless his death can justify
Relenting guilt in Heaven's indulgent sight.
If, sick of folly, I relent, he writes
My name in Heaven with that inverted spear,
(A spear deep-dipt in blood) which pierced his side,
And opened there a font for all mankind
Who strive, who combat crimes, to drink and live:
This, only this, subdues the fear of death!
And what is this?—Survey the wondrous cure,
And at each step let higher wonder rise!
'Pardon for infinite offence! and pardon
Through means that speak its value infinite!
A pardon bought with blood! with blood divine!
With blood divine of him I made my foe;
Persisted to provoke; though wooed and awed;
Blest, and chastised, a flagrant rebel still;
A rebel midst the thunders of his throne;
Nor I alone; a rebel universe;
My species up in arms; not one exempt!
Yet for the foulest of the foul he dies,
Most joyed for the redeemed from deepest guilt;
As if our race were held of highest rank,
And Godhead dearer, as more kind to man.
Bound every heart, and every bosom burn;
O what a scale of miracles is here!
Its lowest round high planted in the skies,
Its towering summit lost beyond the thought
Of man or angel! O that I could climb
The wonderful ascent, with equal praise!
Praise! flow for ever, (if astonishment
Will give thee leave) my praise; for ever flow;
Praise ardent, cordial, constant, to high Heaven
More fragrant than Arabia sacrificed,
And all her spicy mountains in a flame.
So dear, so due to Heaven, shall Praise descend
With her soft plume (from plausive angels' wing
First plucked by man) to tickle mortal ears,
Thus diving in the pockets of the great?
Is praise the perquisite of every paw,
Though black as hell, that grapples well for gold?
Oh, love of gold! thou meanest of amours!
Shall praise her odours waste on virtues dead,
Embalm the base, perfume the stench of guilt,
Earn dirty bread by washing Ethiops fair,
Removing filth, or sinking it from sight;
A scavenger in scenes where vacant posts,
Like gibbets yet untenanted, expect
Their future ornaments? From courts and thrones
Return, apostate Praise! thou vagabond!
Thou prostitute! to thy first love return,
Thy first, thy greatest, once unrivalled theme.
There flow redundant, like Meander flow,
Back to the fountain, to that parent power,
Who gives the tongue to sound, the thought to soar,
The soul to be. Men homage pay to men,
Thoughtless beneath whose dreadful eye they bow,
In mutual awe profound, of clay to clay,
Of guilt to guilt, and turn their backs on thee,
Great Sire! whom thrones celestial ceaseless sing;
To prostrate angels an amazing scene!
O the presumption of man's awe for man!
Man's Author, End, Restorer, Law and Judge!
Thine all; day thine, and thine this gloom of night,
With all her wealth, with all her radiant worlds.
What night eternal, but a frown from thee?
What Heaven's meridian glory, but thy smile?
And shall not praise be thine, not human praise,
While Heaven's high host on hallelujah's live?
O may I breathe no longer than I breathe
My soul in praise to Him who gave my soul
And all her infinite of prospect fair,
Cut through the shades of hell, great Love! by thee,

Oh most adorable! most unadorned!
Where shall that praise begin, which ne'er should end?
Where'er I turn, what claim on all applause!
How is Night's sable mantle laboured o'er,
How richly wrought with attributes divine!
What wisdom shines! what love! This midnight pomp,
This gorgeous arch, with golden worlds inlaid;
Built with divine ambition; nought to thee;
For others his profusion. Thou apart,
Above, beyond: Oh, tell me, mighty Mind,
Where art thou? Shall I dive into the deep?
Call to the sun? or ask the roaring winds
For their Creator? shall I question loud
The thunder, if in that the Almighty dwells?
Or holds he furious storms in straitened reins,
And bids fierce whirlwinds wheel his rapid car?
What mean these questions? Trembling, I retract;
My prostrate soul adores the present God;
Praise I a distant deity? He tunes
My voice (if tuned;) the nerve that writes sustains:
Wrapped in his being I resound his praise:
But though past all diffused, without a shore
His essence; local in his throne (as meet)
To gather the dispersed (as standards call
The listed from afar); to fix a point,
A central point, collective of his sons,
Since finite every nature but his own.
The nameless He, whose nod is Nature's birth,
And Nature's shield the shadow of his hand;
Her dissolution his suspended smile!
The great First-Last; pavilioned high he sits,
In darkness, from excessive splendour borne,
By gods unseen, unless through lustre lost.
His glory, to created glory, bright,
As that to central horrors: he looks down
On all that soars, and spans immensity.
Though night unnumbered worlds unfolds to view,
Boundless creation, what art thou? a beam,
A mere effluvium of his majesty.
And shall an atom of this atom-world
Mutter, in dust and sin, the theme of Heaven?
Down to the centre should I send my thought,
Through beds of glittering ore and glowing gems,
Their beggar'd blaze wants lustre for my lay;
Goes out in darkness: if, on towering wing,
I send it through the boundless vault of stars,
(The stars, though rich, what dross their gold to thee,
Great, good, wise, wonderful, eternal king!)
If to those conscious stars thy throne around,
Praise ever-pouring, and imbibing bliss,
And ask their strain: they want it, more they want,
Poor their abundance, humble their sublime,
Languid their energy, their ardour cold;
Indebted still, their highest rapture burns,
Short of its mark, defective though divine!
Still more—this theme is man's, and man's alone;
Their vast appointments reach it not; they see
On earth a bounty not indulged on high,
And downward look for Heaven's superior praise;
First-born of Ether! high in fields of Light!
View man, to see the glory of your God.
Could angels envy, they had envied here:
And some did envy; and the rest, though gods,
Yet still gods unredeem'd, (there triumphs man,
Tempted to weigh the dust against the skies)
They less would feel, though more adorn my theme
They sung Creation (for in that they shared)
How rose in melody that child of Love,
Creation's great superior, man, is thine;
Thine is Redemption; they just gave the key;
'Tis thine to raise and eternize the song,
Though human, yet divine; for should not this
Raise man o'er man, and kindle seraphs here?
Redemption! 'twas creation more sublime;
Redemption! 'twas the labour of the skies;
Far more than labour—it was death in Heaven!
A truth so strange, 'twere bold to think it true,
If not far bolder still to disbelieve.
Here pause and ponder. Was there Death in Heaven?
What then on earth—on earth which struck the blow?
Who struck it? Who—O how is man enlarged,
Seen through this medium? How the pigmy towers!
How counterpoised his origin from dust!
How counterpoised, to dust his sad return!
How voided his vast distance from the skies!
How near he presses on the seraph's wing!
Which is the seraph? which the born of clay?
How this demonstrates, through the thickest cloud
Of guilt and clay condensed, the Son of Heaven,
The double Son; the made, and the remade;
And shall Heaven's double property be lost?
Man's double madness only can destroy.
To man the bleeding cross has promised all;
The bleeding cross has sworn eternal grace.
Who gave His life, what grace shall He deny?
O ye, who from this rock of ages leap
Apostates, plunging headlong in the deep,
What cordial joy, what consolation strong,
Whatever winds arise, or billows roll,
Our interest in the Master of the storm,
Cling there, and in wreck'd Nature's ruins smile,
While vile apostates tremble in a calm.
Man, know thyself: all wisdom centres there.
To none man seems ignoble but to man;
Angels, that grandeur men o'erlook, admire:
How long shall human nature be their book?
Degenerate mortal! and unread by thee?
The beam dim reason sheds shows wonders there
What high contents—illustrious faculties!

But the grand comment, which displays at full
Our human height, scarce severed from divine,
By Heaven composed, was published on the cross.
Who looks on that, and sees not in himself
An awful stranger, a terrestrial god?
A glorious partner with the Deity
In that high attribute, immortal life?
If a God bleeds, he bleeds not for a worm
I gaze, and as I gaze, my mounting soul
Catches strange fire, Eternity, at thee,
And drops the world, or rather, more enjoys.
How changed the face of Nature! how improved!
What seem'd a chaos shines a glorious world;
Or what a world, an Eden; heighten'd all!
It is another scene—another self!
And still another, as time rolls along,
And that a self far more illustrious still.
Beyond long ages, yet roll'd up in shades
Unpierc'd by bold Conjecture's keenest ray.
What evolutions of surprising Fate!
How Nature opens, and receives my soul,
In boundless walks of raptur'd thought, where gods
Encounter and embrace me. What new births
Of strange adventure, foreign to the sun,
Where what now charms, perhaps whate'er exists,
Old Time and fair Creation are forgot.
Is this extravagant? of man we form
Extravagant conception, to be just:
Conception unconfined wants wings to reach him;
Beyond its reach the Godhead only more.
He, the great Father! kindled at one flame
The world of rationals; one spirit poured
From spirit's awful Fountain—poured Himself
Through all their souls, but not in equal stream,
Profuse or frugal, of the inspiring God,
As his wise plan demanded; and when past
Their various trials, in their various spheres,
If they continue rational, as made,
Resorbs them all into Himself again,
His throne their centre, and his smile their crown.
Why doubt we, then, the glorious truth to sing,
Though yet unsung, as deemed, perhaps, too bold?
Angels are men of a superior kind;
Angels are men in lighter habit clad,
High o'er celestial mountains wing'd in flight;
And men are angels, loaded for an hour,
Who wade this miry vale, and climb with pain,
And slippery step, the bottom of the steep.
Angels their failings, mortals have their praise:
While here, of corps ethereal, such enrolled
And summoned to the glorious standard soon,
Which flames eternal crimson through the skies.
Nor are our brothers thoughtless of their kin,
Yet absent; but not absent from their love.
Michael has fought our battles; Raphael sung
Our triumphs; Gabriel on our errands flown,
Sent by the Sovereign: and are these, O man!
Thy friends, thy warm allies? and thou (shame burn
The cheek to cinder!) rival to the brute?
Religion's all. Descending from the skies
To wretched man, the goddess in her left
Holds out this world, and in her right the next
Religion! the sole voucher man is man;
Supporter sole of man above himself;
E'en in this night of frailty, change, and death,
She gives the soul a soul that acts a god.
Religion, Providence, an after-state!
Here is firm footing; here is solid rock;
This can support us; all is sea beside;
Sinks under us; bestorms, and then devours.
His hand the good man fastens on the skies,
And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl.
As when a wretch, from thick polluted air,
Darkness and stench, and suffocating damps,
And dungeon-horrors, by kind Fate discharged,
Climbs some fair eminence, where ether pure,
Surrounds him, and Elysian prospects rise;
His heart exults, his spirits cast their load,
As if new-born he triumphs in the change:
So joys the soul, when from inglorious aims
And sordid sweets, from feculence and froth
Of ties terrestrial set at large, she mounts
To Reason's region, her own element,
Breathes hopes immortal, and affects the skies.
Religion! thou the soul of happiness,
And, groaning Calvary! of thee: there shine
The noblest truths; there strongest motives sing;
There sacred violence assaults the soul;
There nothing but compulsion is forborne.
Can love allure us! or can terror awe?
He weeps!—the falling drop puts out the sun;
He sighs!—the sigh earth's deep foundation shakes.
If in his love so terrible, what then
His wrath inflamed? his tenderness on fire?
Like soft, smooth oil, outblazing other fires?
Can prayer, can praise, avert it?—Thou, my all!
My theme! my inspiration! and my crown!
My strength in age! my rise in low estate!
My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth!—my world!
My light in darkness! and my life in death!
My boast through time! bliss through eternity!
Eternity, too short to speak thy praise,
Or fathom thy profound of love to man!
To man of men the meanest, even to me;
My sacrifice! my God!—what things are these!
What then art Thou? by what name shall I call thee?
Knew I the name devout archangels use,
Devout archangels should the name enjoy,
By me unrivalled; thousands more sublime,
None half so dear as that which, though unspoke,
Still glows at heart. O how Omnipotence
Is lost in love! thou great Philanthropist!
Father of angels! but the friend of man!

Like Jacob, fondest of the younger born!
Thou who did'st save him, snatch the smoking brand
From out the flames, and quench it in thy blood!
How art thou pleased by bounty to distress!
To make us groan beneath our gratitude,
Too big for birth! to favour and confound;
To challenge, and to distance all return!
Of lavish love stupendous heights to soar,
And leave Praise panting in the distant vale!
Thy right, too great, defrauds thee of thy due;
And sacrilegious our sublimest song!
But since the naked will obtains thy smile,
Beneath this monument of praise unpaid,
And future life symphonious to my strain,
(That noblest hymn to Heaven!) for ever lie
Intombed my fear of death! and every fear,
The dread of every evil, but thy frown.
Whom see I yonder so demurely smile?
Laughter a labour, and might break their rest.
Ye Quietists! in homage to the skies!
Serene! of soft address! who mildly make
An unobtrusive tender of your hearts,
Abhorring violence! who halt indeed,
But, for the blessing, wrestle not with Heaven!
Think you my song too turbulent? too warm?
Are passions, then, the pagans of the soul?
Reason alone baptiz'd? alone ordained
To touch things sacred? Oh, for warmer still!
Guilt chills my zeal, and age benumbs my powers:
Oh, for an humbler heart and prouder song!
Thou, my much injured Theme! with that soft eye
Which melted o'er doomed Salem, deign to look
Compassion to the coldness of my breast
And pardon to the winter in my strain.
Oh, ye cold-hearted, frozen Formalists!
On such a theme 'tis impious to be calm:
Passion is reason, transport temper here.
Shall Heaven, which gave us ardour, and has shown
Her own for man so strongly, not disdain
What smooth emollients in theology,
Recumbent Virtue's downy doctors, preach;
That prose of piety, a lukewarm praise?
Rise odours sweet from incense uninflamed?
Devotion when lukewarm is undevout;
But when it glows, its heat is struck to Heaven;
To human hearts her golden harps are strung;
High Heaven's orchestra chaunts Amen to man.
Hear I, or dream I hear, their distant strain,
Sweet to the soul, and tasting strong of Heaven,
Soft-wafted on celestial Pity's plume,
Through the vast spaces of the universe,
To cheer me in this melancholy gloom?
Oh, when will death (now stingless) like a friend
Admit me of their choir? Oh, when will death
This mouldering, old, partition-wall throw down?
Give beings, one in nature, one abode?
Oh, Death divine! that giv'st us to the skies:
Great future! glorious patron of the past
And present! when shall I thy shrine adore?
From nature's continent, immensely wide,
Immensely blest, this little isle of life,
This dark incarcerating colony,
Divides us. Happy day! that breaks our chain;
That manumits: that calls from exile home
That leads to Nature's great metropolis,
And re-admits us, through the guardian hand
Of elder brothers, to our Father's throne;
Who hears our Advocate, and, through his wounds
Beholding man, allows that tender name.
'Tis this makes Christian-triumph a command;
'Tis this makes joy a duty to the wise.
'Tis impious in a good man to be sad.
Seest thou, Lorenzo, where hangs all our hope?
Touched by the Cross we live, or more than die;
That touch which touched not angels; more divine
Than that which touched confusion into form,
And darkness into glory: partial touch!
Ineffably pre-eminent regard!
Sacred to man, and sovereign through the whole
Long golden chain of miracles, which hangs
From Heaven through all duration, and supports,
In one illustrious and amazing plan,
Thy welfare, Nature! and thy God's renown.
That touch, with charms celestial, heals the soul
Diseased, drives pain from guilt, lights life in death,
Turns earth to heaven, to heavenly thrones transforms
The ghastly ruins of the mouldering tomb.
Dost ask me when? When He who died, returns;
Returns, how changed! where then the man of wo?
In Glory's terrors all the Godhead burns,
And all his courts, exhausted by the tide
Of deities triumphant in his train,
Leave a stupendous solitude in Heaven;
Replenished soon, replenished with increase
Of pomp and multitude; a radiant band
Of angels new, of angels from the tomb!
Is this by fancy thrown remote? and rise
Dark doubts between the promise and event?
I send thee not to volumes for thy cure;
Read Nature; Nature is a friend to truth;
Nature is christian; preaches to mankind,
And bids dead matter aid us in our creed.
Hast thou ne'er seen the comet's flaming flight?
The illustrious stranger passing terror sheds
On gazing nations from his fiery train,
Of length enormous; takes his ample round
Through depths of ether; coasts unnumbered worlds
Of more than solar glory; doubles wide
Heaven's mighty cape; and then revisits earth,
From the long travel of a thousand years.
Thus at the destined period shall return
He, once on earth, who bids the comet blaze,
And with Him all our triumph o'er the tomb.

Nature is dumb on this important point,
Or Hope precarious in low whisper breathes;
Faith speaks aloud, distinct; ev'n adders hear,
But turn, and dart into the dark again.
Faith builds a bridge across the gulf of death,
To break the shock blind Nature can not shun,
And lands Thought smoothly on the farther shore.
Death's terror is the mountain faith removes,
That mountain barrier between man and peace.
'Tis faith disarms Destruction, and absolves
From every clamorous charge the guiltless tomb.
Why disbelieve? Lorenzo!—'Reason bids;
All-sacred Reason!'—Hold her sacred still;
Nor shalt thou want a rival in thy flame:
All-sacred Reason! source and soul of all
Demanding praise on earth, or earth above!
My heart is thine: deep in its inmost folds
Live thou with life: live dearer of the two.
Wear I the blessed Cross, by Fortune stamp'd
On passive Nature before Thought was born?
My birth's blind bigot! fired with loyal zeal!—
No: Reason rebaptized me when adult:
Weighed true and false in her impartial scale;
My heart became the convert of my head,
And made that choice which once was but my fate.
'On argument alone my faith is built,'
Reason pursued is Faith; and unpursued,
Where proof invites, 'tis reason then no more:
And such our proof, that or our Faith is right,
Or Reason lies, and Heaven designed it wrong.
Absolve we this! what then is blasphemy?—
Fond as we are, and justly fond of Faith,
Reason, we grant, demands our first regard;
The mother honoured, as the daughter dear.
Reason the root, fair Faith is but the flower;
The fading flower shall die, but Reason lives
Immortal, as her Father in the skies!
When faith is virtue, reason makes it so.
Wrong not the Christian: think not Reason yours;
'Tis Reason our great Master holds so dear;
'Tis Reason's injured rights his wrath resents;
'Tis Reason's voice obeyed his glorious crown:
To give lost Reason life he poured his own.
Believe, and show the reason of a man;
Believe, and taste the pleasure of a god;
Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb.
Through Reason's wounds alone thy Faith can die,
Which dying, tenfold terrors gives to Death,
And dips in venom his twice-mortal sting.
Learn hence what honours, what loud pæans, due
To those who push our antidote aside;
Those boasted friends to reason and to man,
Whose fatal love stabs every joy, and leaves
Death's terror heightened, gnawing on his heart.
These pompous sons of Reason idolized,
And vilified at once; of Reason dead,
Then deified, as monarchs were of old;
What conduct plants proud laurels on their brow?
While love of truth through all their camp resounds,
They draw Pride's curtain o'er the noon-tide ray,
Spike up their inch of reason on the point
Of philosophic wit, called Argument,
And then exulting in their taper, cry,
'Behold the sun!' and, Indian-like, adore.
Talk they of morals? O thou bleeding Love!
Thou Maker of new morals to mankind!
The grand morality is love of Thee.
As wise as Socrates, if such they were,
(Nor will they bate of that sublime renown,)
As wise as Socrates might justly stand
The definition of a modern fool.
A Christian is the highest style of man!
And is there who the blessed cross wipes off,
As a foul blot, from his dishonoured brow?
If angels tremble, 'tis at such a sight:
The wretch they quit, desponding of their charge,
More struck with grief or wonder who can tell?
Ye sold to sense! ye citizens of earth!
(For such alone the Christian banner fly)
Know ye how wise your choice, how great your gain?
Behold the picture of earth's happiest man:
'He calls his wish, it comes; he sends it back,
And says he called another: that arrives,
Meets the same welcome; yet he still calls on;
Till one calls him, who varies not his call,
But holds him fast, in chains of darkness bound
Till Nature dies, and Judgment sets him free;
A freedom far less welcome than his chain.'
But grant man happy; grant him happy long;
Add to life's highest prize her latest hour:
That hour, so late, is nimble in approach,
That, like a post, comes on in full career.
How swift the shuttle flies that weaves thy shroud!
Where is the fable of thy former years?
Thrown down the gulf of time; as far from thee
As they had ne'er been thine: the day in hand,
Like a bird struggling to get loose, is going;
Scarce now possessed, so suddenly 'tis gone;
And each swift moment fled, is death advanced
By strides as swift. Eternity is all;
And whose eternity? who triumphs there?
Bathing for ever in the font of bliss!
For ever basking in the Deity!
Lorenzo! who?—thy conscience shall reply.
O give it leave to speak; 'twill speak ere long,
Thy leave unasked. Lorenzo! hear it now,
While useful its advice, its accent mild.
By the great edict, the divine decree,
Truth is deposited with man's last hour;
An honest hour, and faithful to her trust;
Truth! eldest daughter of the Deity;
Truth! of his council when he made the worlds;
Nor less, when he shall judge the worlds he made,
Though silent long, and sleeping ne'er so sound.

Smothered with errors, and oppressed with toys,
That heaven-commissioned hour no sooner calls,
But from her cavern in the soul's abyss,
Like him they fable under Ætna whelmed,
The goddess bursts in thunder and in flame,
Loudly convinces, and severely pains.
Dark demons I discharge, and hydra-stings;
The keen vibration of bright truth—is hell;
Just definition! though by schools untaught.
Ye deaf to truth! peruse this parsoned page,
And trust, for once, a prophet and a priest;—
'Men may live fools, but fools they can not die.'

NIGHT V.

THE RELAPSE.

To the Right Hon. the Earl of Litchfield.

Lorenzo! to recriminate is just.
'Fondness for fame is avarice of air.'
I grant the man is vain who writes for praise:
Praise no man e'er deserved, who sought no more.
As just thy second charge. I grant the Muse
Has often blushed at her degenerate sons,
Retained by Sense to plead her filthy cause,
To raise the low, to magnify the mean,
And subtilize the gross into refined;
As if to magic numbers' powerful charm
'Twas given to make a civet of their song
Obscene, and sweeten ordure to perfume.
Wit, a true pagan, deifies the brute,
And lifts our swine-enjoyments from the mire.
The fact notorious, nor obscure the cause.
We wear the chains of pleasure and of pride:
These share the man, and these distract him too;
Draw different ways, and clash in their commands.
Pride, like an eagle, builds among the stars;
But Pleasure, lark-like, nests upon the ground,
Joys, shared by brute creation, Pride resents;
Pleasure embraces: man would both enjoy,
And both at once: a point how hard to gain!
But what can't Wit, when stung by strong desire?
Wit dares attempt this arduous enterprise.
Since joys of Sense can't rise to Reason's taste,
In subtle Sophistry's laborious forge
Wit hammers out a reason new, that stoops
To sordid scenes, and meets them with applause.
Wit calls the Graces the chaste zone to loose,
Nor less than a plump god to fill the bowl:
A thousand phantoms and a thousand spells,
A thousand opiates scatters to delude,
To fascinate, inebriate, lay asleep,
And the fooled mind delightfully confound.
Thus that which shocked the judgment shocks no more,
That which gave pride offence, no more offends.
Pleasure and Pride, by nature mortal foes,
At war eternal, which in man shall reign,
By Wit's address patch up a fatal peace,
And hand in hand lead on the rank debauch.
From rank refined to delicate and gay,
Art, cursed Art! wipes off the' indebted blush
From Nature's cheek, and bronzes every shame.
Man smiles in ruin, glories in his guilt,
And Infamy stands candidate for praise.
All writ by man in favour of the soul,
These sensual ethics far, in bulk, transcend.
The flowers of eloquence, profusely poured
O'er spotted Vice, fill half the lettered world.
Can powers of genius exorcise their page,
And consecrate enormities with song?
But let not these inexpiable strains
Condemn the Muse that knows her dignity,
Nor meanly stops at time, but holds the world
As 'tis, in Nature's ample field, a point;
A point in her esteem, from whence to start,
And run the round of universal space,
To visit being universal there,
And being's Source, that utmost flight of mind!
Yet spite of this so vast circumference,
Well knows but what is moral nought is great.
Sing syrens only? do not angels sing?
There is in Poësy a decent pride,
Which well becomes her when she speaks to Prose,
Her younger sister, haply not more wise.
Thinkest thou, Lorenzo, to find pastimes here?
No guilty passion blown into a flame,
No foible flattered, dignity disgraced,
No fairy field of fiction, all on flower,
No rainbow-colours here, or silken tale;
But solemn counsels, images of awe,
Truths which Eternity lets fall on man,
With double weight, through these revolving spheres,
This death-deep silence, and incumbent shade:
Thoughts such as shall revisit your last hour,
Visit uncalled, and live when life expires;
And thy dark pencil, Midnight! darker still
In melancholy dipped, imbrowns the whole.
Yet this, even this, my laughter-loving friends!
Lorenzo! and thy brothers of the smile!
If what imports you most can most engage,
Shall steal your ear, and chain you to my song.
Or if you fail me, know the wise shall taste
The truths I sing; the truths I sing shall feel;
And, feeling, give assent; and their assent
Is ample recompense; is more than praise.
But chiefly thine, O Litchfield!—nor mistake;
Think not unintroduced I force my way:
Narcissa, not unknown, nor unallied
By virtue, or by blood, illustrious youth!
To thee, from blooming amaranthine bowers,
Where all the language harmony, descends
Uncalled, and asks admittance for the Muse;
A Muse that will not pain thee with thy praise:
Thy praise she drops, by nobler still inspired.

O thou, bless'd Spirit! whether the Supreme,
Great antemundane Father! in whose breast
Embryo-Creation, unborn being, dwelt,
And all its various revolutions rolled
Present, though future, prior to themselves;
Whose breath can blow it into nought again,
Or from his throne some delegated power,
Who, studious of our peace, dost turn the thought
From vain and vile to solid and sublime!
Unseen thou lead'st me to delicious draughts
Of inspiration, from a purer stream,
And fuller of the God, than that which burst
From famed Castalia; nor is yet allayed
My sacred thirst, though long my soul has ranged
Through pleasing paths of moral and divine,
By thee sustained, and lighted by the stars.
By them best lighted are the paths of thought;
Nights are their days, their most illumined hours.
By day the soul, o'erborne by life's career,
Stunned by the din, and giddy with the glare,
Reels far from reason, jostled by the throng.
By day the soul is passive, all her thoughts
Imposed, precarious, broken, ere mature.
By night, from objects free, from passion cool,
Thoughts uncontrolled and unimpressed, the births
Of pure election, arbitrary range,
Not to the limits of one world confined;
But from ethereal travels light on earth,
As voyagers drop anchor, for repose.
Let Indians, and the gay, like Indians, fond
Of feathered fopperies, the sun adore:
Darkness has more divinity for me;
It strikes thought inward; it drives back the soul
To settle on herself, our point supreme!
There lies our theatre; there sits our judge.
Darkness the curtain drops o'er life's dull scene;
'Tis the kind hand of Providence stretched out
'Twixt man and vanity; 'tis Reason's reign,
And Virtue's too; these tutelary shades
Are man's asylum from the tainted throng.
Night is the good man's friend, and guardian too;
It no less rescues virtue than inspires.
Virtue, for ever frail as fair below,
Her tender nature suffers in the crowd,
Nor touches on the world without a stain.
The world's infectious; few bring back at eve,
Immaculate, the manners of the morn.
Something we thought, is blotted; we resolved,
Is shaken; we renounced, returns again.
Each salutation may slide in a sin
Unthought before, or fix a firmer flaw.
Nor is it strange; light, motion, concourse, noise,
All scatter us abroad. Thought, outward-bound,
Neglectful of our home-affairs, flies off
In fume and dissipation, quits her charge,
And leaves the breast unguarded to the foe.
Present example gets within our guard,
And acts with double force, by few repelled.
Ambition fires ambition; love of gain
Strikes, like a pestilence, from breast to breast;
Riot, pride, perfidy, blue vapours breathe;
And inhumanity is caught from man,
From smiling man! A slight, a single glance,
And shot at random, often has brought home
A sudden fever to the throbbing heart
Of envy, rancour, or impure desire.
We see, we hear, with peril: Safety dwells
Remote from multitude. The world's a school
Of wrong, and what proficients swarm around
We must or imitate or disapprove;
Must list as their accomplices or foes:
That stains our innocence, this wounds our peace.
From Nature's birth, hence, Wisdom has been smit
With sweet recess, and languished for the shade.
This sacred shade and solitude, what is it?
'Tis the felt presence of the Deity!
Few are the faults we flatter when alone;
Vice sinks in her allurements, is ungilt,
And looks, like other objects, black by night.
By night an atheist half believes a God!
Night is fair Virtue's immemorial friend.
The conscious Moon, through every distant age,
Has held a lamp to Wisdom, and let fall,
On Contemplation's eye, her purging ray.
The famed Athenian, he who wooed from Heaven
Philosophy the fair, to dwell with men,
And form their manners, not inflame their pride;
While o'er his head, as fearful to molest
His labouring mind, the stars in silence slide
And seem all gazing on their future guest,
See him soliciting his ardent suit
In private audience: all the live-long night
Rigid in thought, and motionless, he stands,
Nor quits his theme or posture till the sun
(Rude drunkard! rising rosy from the main)
Disturbs his nobler intellectual beam,
And gives him to the tumult of the world.
Hail, precious moments, stolen from the black waste
Of murdered time; auspicious Midnight, hail!
The world excluded, every passion hushed,
And opened a calm intercourse with Heaven,
Here the soul sits in council, ponders past,
Predestines future action; sees, not feels,
Tumultuous life, and reasons with the storm,
All her lies answers, and thinks down her charms.
What awful joy! what mental liberty!
I am not pent in darkness; rather say
(If not too bold) in darkness I'm imbowered.
Delightful gloom! the clustering thoughts around
Spontaneous rise, and blossom in the shade;
But droop by day, and sicken in the sun.
Thought borrows light elsewhere; from that first fire,
Fountain of animation! whence descends
Urania, my celestial guest! who deigns
Nightly to visit me, so mean; and now,

Conscious how needful discipline to man,
From pleasing dalliance with the charms of night,
My wandering thought recalls, to what excites
Far other beat of heart, Narcissa's tomb?
Or is it feeble nature calls me back,
And breaks my spirit into grief again?
Is it a Stygian vapour in my blood?
A cold slow puddle, creeping through my veins?
Or is it thus with all men?—Thus, with all.
What are we? how unequal; now we soar,
And now we sink. To be the same, transcends
Our present prowess. Dearly pays the soul
For lodging ill; too dearly rents her clay.
Reason, a baffled counsellor! but adds
The blush of weakness to the bane of wo.
The noblest spirit, fighting her hard fate
In this damp, dusky region, charged with storms,
But feebly flutters, yet untaught to fly;
Or, flying, short her flight, and sure her fall:
Our utmost strength, when down, to rise again;
And not to yield, though beaten, all our praise.
'Tis vain to seek in men for more than man.
Though proud in promise, big in previous thought,
Experience damps our triumph. I, who late
Emerging from the shadows of the grave,
Where grief detained me prisoner, mounting high,
Threw wide the gates of everlasting day.
And called mankind to glory, shook off pain,
Mortality shook off, in ether pure,
And struck the stars; now feel my spirits fail;
They drop me from the zenith; down I rush,
Like him whom fable fledged with waxen wings,
In sorrow drowned—but not in sorrow lost.
How wretched is the man who never mourned!
I dive for precious pearl in Sorrow's stream:
Not so the thoughtless man that only grieves,
Takes all the torment, and rejects the gain,
(Inestimable gain!) and gives Heaven leave
To make him but more wretched, not more wise.
If wisdom is our lesson (and what else
Ennobles man? what else have angels learned?)
Grief! more proficients in thy school are made,
Than Genius or proud Learning e'er could boast.
Voracious learning, often o'er-fed,
Digests not into sense her motley meal.
This book-case, with dark booty almost burst,
This forager on other's wisdom, leaves
Her native farm, her reason, quite untilled;
With mixed manure she surfeits the rank soil,
Dunged, but not drest, and rich to beggary:
A pomp untameable of weeds prevails;
Her servant's wealth, incumbered, Wisdom mourns.
And what says Genius? 'Let the dull be wise;'
Genius, too hard for right, can prove it wrong,
And loves to boast, where blush men less inspired.
It pleads exemption from the laws of Sense,
Considers Reason as a leveller,
And scorns to share a blessing with the crowd.
That wise it could be, thinks an ample claim;
To glory and to pleasure gives the rest.
Crassus but sleeps, Ardelio is undone,
Wisdom less shudders at a fool than wit.
But Wisdom smiles, when humbled mortals weep.
When Sorrow wounds the breast, as ploughs the glebe,
And hearts obdurate feel her softening shower,
Her seed celestial, then, glad Wisdom sows;
Her golden harvest triumphs in the soil.
If so, Narcissa, welcome my relapse;
I'll raise a tax on my calamity,
And reap rich compensation from my pain.
I'll range the plenteous intellectual field,
And gather every thought of sovereign power
To chase the moral maladies of man;
Thoughts which may bear transplanting to the skies,
Though natives of this coarse penurious soil;
Nor wholly wither there, where seraphs sing,
Refined, exalted, not annulled, in Heaven:
Reason, the sun that gives them birth, the same
In either clime, though more illustrious there.
These choicely culled, and elegantly ranged,
Shall form a garland for Narcissa's tomb,
And, peradventure, of no fading flowers.
Say, on what themes shall puzzled choice descend?
'The importance of contemplating the tomb;
Why men decline it; suicide's foul birth;
The various kinds of grief; the faults of age;
And death's dread character—invite my song.'
And, first, the importance of our end surveyed.
Friends counsel quick dismission of our grief.
Mistaken kindness! our hearts heal too soon.
Are they more kind than He who struck the blow
Who bid it do its errand in our hearts,
And banish peace till nobler guests arrive,
And bring it back a true and endless peace?
Calamities are friends, as glaring day
Of these unnumbered lustres rob our sight,
Prosperity puts out unnumbered thoughts
Of import high, and light divine to man.

The man how blessed, who, sick of gaudy scenes
(Scenes apt to thrust between us and ourselves!)
Is led by choice to take his favourite walk
Beneath Death's gloomy, silent, cypress shades,
Unpierced by Vanity's fantastic ray;
To read his monuments, to weigh his dust,
Visit his vaults, and dwell among the tombs!
Lorenzo! read with me Narcissa's stone;
(Narcissa was thy favourite) let us read
Her moral stone; few doctors preach so well;
Few orators so tenderly can touch
The feeling heart. What pathos in the date!
Apt words can strike; and yet in them we see
Faint images of what we here enjoy.
What cause have we to build on length of life?

Temptations seize when fear is laid asleep,
And ill foreboded is our strongest guard.
  See from her tomb, as from an humble shrine,
Truth, radiant goddess! sallies on my soul,
And puts Delusion's dusky train to flight;
Dispels the mist our sultry passions raise,
From objects low, terrestrial, and obscene,
And shows the real estimate of things,
Which no man, unafflicted ever saw;
Pulls off the veil from Virtue's rising charms;
Detects temptation in a thousand lies.
Truth bids me look on men as autumn-leaves,
And all they bleed for as the summer's dust
Driven by the whirlwind: lighted by her beams,
I widen my horizon, gain new powers,
See things invisible, feel things remote,
Am present with futurities; think nought
To man so foreign, as the joys possessed,
Nought so much his as those beyond the grave.
  No folly keeps its colour in her sight;
Pale worldly Wisdom loses all her charms.
In pompous promise from her schemes profound,
If future fate she plans, 'tis all in leaves,
Like sybil, unsubstantial, fleeting bliss!
At the first blast it vanishes in air.
Not so celestial. Wouldst thou know, Lorenzo!
How differ wordly wisdom and divine?
Just as the waning and the waxing moon,
More empty worldly wisdom every day,
And every day more fair her rival shines.
When later, there's less time to play the fool.
Soon our whole turn for Wisdom is expired,
(Thou knowest she calls no council in the grave)
And everlasting fool is writ in fire,
Or real wisdom wafts us to the skies.
  As worldly schemes resemble sybils' leaves,
The good man's days to sybils' books compare,
(In ancient story read, thou know'st the tale)
In price still rising as in number less,
Inestimable quite his final hour.
For that who thrones can offer, offer thrones;
Insolvent worlds the purchase can not pay.
'Oh let me die his death!' all Nature cries.
'Then live his life.'—All Nature falters there;
Our great physician daily to consult,
To commune with the grave our only cure.
  What grave prescribes the best?—A friend's;
    and yet
From a friend's grave how soon we disengage!
Ev'n to the dearest, as his marble, cold.
Why are friends ravished from us? 'tis to bind,
By soft Affection's ties, on human hearts
The thought of Death, which reason, too supine,
Or misemployed, so rarely fastens there.
Nor Reason nor Affection, no, nor both
Combined, can break the witchcrafts of the world.
Behold the inexorable hour at hand;
Behold the inexorable hour forgot!
And to forget it the chief aim of life,
Though well to ponder it is life's chief end.
Is Death, that ever-threatening, ne'er remote,
That all-important, and that only sure,
(Come when he will) an unexpected guest?
Nay, though invited by the loudest calls
Of blind Imprudence, unexpected still;
Though numerous messengers are sent before,
To warn his great arrival! What the cause,
The wondrous cause, of this mysterious ill?
All Heaven looks down, astonished at the sight
  Is it that Life has sown her joys so thick,
We can't thrust in a single care between?
Is it that Life has such a swarm of cares,
The thought of Death can't enter for the throng?
Is it that Time steals on with downy feet,
Nor wakes Indulgence from her golden dream?
To-day is so like yesterday, it cheats;
We take the lying sister for the same.
Life glides away, Lorenzo! like a brook,
For ever changing, unperceived the change,
In the same brook none ever bathed him twice;
To the same life none ever twice awoke.
We call the brook the same; the same we think
Our life, though still more rapid in its flow,
Nor mark the much irrevocably lapsed,
And mingled with the sea. Or shall we say
(Retaining still the brook to bear us on)
That life is like a vessel on the stream?
In life embarked, we smoothly down the tide
Of time descend, but not on time intent;
Amused, unconscious of the gliding wave,
Till on a sudden we perceive a shock;
We start, awake, look out: what see we there?—
Our brittle bark is burst on Charon's shore.
  Is this the cause Death flies all human thought
Or is it Judgment by the Will struck blind,
That domineering mistress of the soul!
Like him so strong, by Dalilah the fair?
Or is it Fear turns startled Reason back,
From looking down a precipice so steep?—
'Tis dreadful; and the dread is wisely placed
By Nature, conscious of the make of man.
A dreadful friend it is, a terror kind,
A flaming sword to guard the tree of Life.
By that unawed, in life's most smiling hour
The good man would repine: would suffer joys
And burn impatient for his promised skies,
The bad, on each punctilious pique of pride,
Or gloom of humour, would give Rage the rein,
Bound o'er the barrier, rush into the dark,
And mar the scenes of Providence below.
  What groan was that, Lorenzo?—Furies! rise,
And drown in your less execrable yell,
Britannia's shame. There took her gloomy flight,
On wing impetuous, a black sullen soul,
Blasted from hell, with horrid lust of death.
Thy friend, the brave, the gallant Altamont,
So called, so thought—and then he fled the field:
Less base the fear of death than fear of life.

O Britain! infamous for suicide!
An island, in thy manners: far disjoined
From the whole world of rationals besides!
In ambient waves plunge thy polluted head,
Wash the dire stain, nor shock the continent.
But thou be shocked, while I detect the cause
Of self-assault, expose the monster's birth,
And bid abhorrence hiss it round the world.
Blame not thy clime, nor chide the distant sun;
The sun is innocent, thy clime absolved.
In moral climes kind Nature never made.
The cause I sing, in Eden might prevail,
And proves it is thy folly, not thy fate.
The soul of man, (let man in homage bow,
Who names his soul) a native of the skies!
High-born and free, her freedom should maintain,
Unsold, unmortgaged for earth's little bribes.
The illustrious stranger, in this foreign land,
Like strangers, jealous of her dignity,
Studious of home, and ardent to return.
Of earth suspicious, earth's enchanted cup
With cool reserve light touching, should indulge
On immortality, her godlike taste;
There take large draughts; make her chief banquet there.
But some reject this sustenance divine,
To beggarly vile appetites descend,
Ask alms of earth, for guests that came from Heaven!
Sink into slaves, and sell, for present hire,
Their rich reversion, and (what shares its fate)
Their native freedom, to the prince who sways
This nether world: and when his payments fail,
When his foul basket gorges them no more,
Or their palled palates loath the basket full,
Are instantly, with wild demoniac rage,
For breaking all the chains of Providence,
And bursting their confinement, though fast barred
By laws divine and human, guarded strong
With horrors doubled to defend the pass,
The blackest Nature or dire guilt can raise,
And moated round with fathomless destruction,
Sure to receive and whelm them in their fall.
Such, Britons! is the cause, to you unknown,
Or, worse, o'erlooked; o'erlooked by magistrates,
Thus criminals themselves! I grant the deed
Is madness; but the madness of the heart.
And what is that? our utmost bound of guilt.
A sensual unreflecting life is big
With monstrous births, and Suicide, to crown
The black infernal brood. The bold to break
Heaven's law supreme, and desperately rush
Through sacred Nature's murder, on their own,
Because they never think of death, they die.
'Tis equally man's duty, glory, gain,
At once to shun, and meditate his end.
When by the bed of languishment we sit,
(The seat of Wisdom! if our choice, not fate)
Or o'er our dying friends in anguish hang
Wipe the cold dew, or stay the sinking head;
Number their moments, and in every clock
Start at the voice of an eternity;
See the dim lamp of life just feebly lift
An agonizing beam, at us to gaze,
Then sink again, and quiver into death,
That most pathetic herald of our own;
How read we such sad scenes? As sent to man
In perfect vengeance? no; in pity sent,
To melt him down, like wax, and then impress,
Indelible, Death's image on his heart,
Bleeding for others, trembling for himself.
We bleed, we tremble, we forget, we smile,
The mind turns fool before the cheek is dry.
Our quick-returning folly cancels all,
As the tide rushing razes what is writ
In yielding sands, and smoothes the lettered shore
Lorenzo! hast thou ever weighed a sigh?
Or studied the philosophy of tears?
(A science yet unlectured in our schools!)
Hast thou descended deep into the breast,
And seen their source? if not, descend with me
And trace these briny rivulets to their springs.
Our funeral tears from different causes rise:
As if from separate cisterns in the soul,
Of various kinds they flow. From tender heart
By soft contagion called, some burst at once,
And stream obsequious to the leading eye:
Some ask more time, by curious art distilled.
Some hearts, in secret hard, unapt to melt,
Struck by the magic of the public eye,
Like Moses' smitten rock, gush out amain:
Some weep to share the fame of the deceased,
So high in merit, and to them so dear:
They dwell on praises which they think they share,
And thus, without a blush, commend themselves.
Some mourn, in proof that something they could love;
They weep not to relieve their grief, but show.
Some weep in perfect justice to the dead,
As conscious all their love is in arrear.
Some mischievously weep, not unapprised
Tears sometimes aid the conquest of an eye.
With what address the soft Ephesians draw
Their sable network o'er entangled hearts?
As seen through crystal, how their roses glow,
While liquid pearl runs trickling down their cheek?
Of her's not prouder Egypt's wanton queen,
Carousing gems, herself dissolved in love.
Some weep at death, abstracted from the dead,
And celebrate, like Charles, their own decease.
By kind construction some are deemed to weep,
Because a decent veil conceals their joy.
Some weep in earnest, and yet weep in vain,
As deep in indiscretion as in wo.
Passion, blind passion! impotently pours
Tears that deserve more tears; while Reason sleeps,

Or gazes, like an idiot, unconcerned,
Nor comprehends the meaning of the storm;
Knows not it speaks to her, and her alone.
Irrationals all sorrows are beneath,
That noble gift! that privilege of man!
From sorrow's pang, the birth of endless joy:
But these are barren of that birth divine;
They weep impetuous as the summer-storm,
And full as short! the cruel grief soon tam'd,
They make a pastime of the stingless tale;
Far as the deep-resounding knell they spread
The dreadful news, and hardly feel it more:
No grain of wisdom pays them for their wo.
Half-round the globe the tears pumped up by death
Are spent in watering vanities of life;
In making folly flourish still more fair.
When the sick soul, her wonted stay withdrawn,
Reclines on earth and sorrows in the dust;
Instead of learning there her true support,
(Though there thrown down her true support to learn,)
Without Heaven's aid, impatient to be blest,
She crawls to the next shrub or bramble vile,
Though from the stately cedar's arms she fell;
With stale foresworn embraces clings anew,
The stranger weds, and blossoms as before,
In all the fruitless fopperies of life,
Presents her weed, well-fancied at the ball,
And raffles for the death's-head on the ring.
So wept Aurelia, till the destined youth
Stept in with his receipt for making smiles,
And blanching sables into bridal bloom.
So wept Lorenzo fair Clarissa's fate,
Who gave that angel-boy on whom he dotes,
And died to give him, orphaned in his birth!
Not such, Narcissa! my distress for thee.
I'll make an altar of thy sacred tomb,
To sacrifice to Wisdom.—What wast thou?
"Young, gay, and fortunate" Each yields a theme:
I'll dwell on each, to shun thought more severe;
(Heaven knows I labour with severer still!)
I'll dwell on each, and quite exhaust thy death.
A soul without reflection, like a pile
Without inhabitant, to ruin runs.
And, first, thy youth: what says it to gray hairs?
Narcissa! I'm become thy pupil now.
Early, bright, transient, chaste, as morning dew,
She sparkled, was exhaled, and went to Heaven!
Time on this head has snowed, yet still 'tis borne
Aloft, nor thinks but on another's grave.
Covered with shame I speak it, age severe
Old worn-out vice sets down for virtue fair;
With graceless gravity chastising youth,
That youth chastised surpassing in a fault,
Father of all, forgetfulness of death!
As if, like objects pressing on the sight,
Death had advanced too near us to be seen;
Or that life's loan Time ripened into right,
And men might plead prescription from the grave;
Deathless, from repetition of reprieve.
Deathless? far from it! such are dead already;
Their hearts are buried, and the world their grave.
Tell me, some god! my guardian angel! tell
What thus infatuates? what enchantment plants
The phantom of an age 'twixt us and Death,
Already at the door? He knocks; we hear him,
And yet we will not hear. What mail defends
Our untouched hearts? what miracle turns off
The pointed thought, which from a thousand quivers
Is daily darted, and is daily shunned?
We stand, as in a battle, throngs on throngs
Around us falling, wounded oft ourselves,
Though bleeding with our wounds, immortal still!
We see Time's furrows on another's brow,
And Death intrenched, preparing his assault;
How few themselves in that just mirror see!
Or, seeing, draw their inference as strong!
There death is certain; doubtful here: he must,
And soon: we may, within an age, expire,
Though gray our heads, our thoughts and aims are green:
Like damaged clocks, whose hand and bell dissent,
Folly sings six, while Nature points at twelve.
Absurd longevity! more, more, it cries:
More life, more wealth, more trash of every kind.
And wherefore mad for more, when relish fails?
Object and appetite must club for joy:
Shall Folly labour hard to mend the bow,
Bawbles, I mean, that strike us from without,
While Nature is relaxing every string!
Ask Thought for joy; grow rich, and hoard within,
Think you the soul, when this life's rattles cease,
Has nothing of more manly to succeed?
Contract the taste immortal; learn even now
To relish what alone subsists hereafter.
Divine, or none, henceforth, your joys for ever;
Of age, the glory is to wish to die:
That wish is praise and promise; it applauds
Past life, and promises our future bliss.
What weakness see not children in their sires.
Grand climacterical absurdities!
Gray-hair'd authority, to faults of youth
How shocking! it makes folly thrice a fool;
And our first childhood might our last despise
Peace and esteem is all that age can hope:
Nothing but wisdom gives the first: the last
Nothing but the repute of being wise.
Folly bars both: our age is quite undone.
What folly can be ranker? like our shadows,
Our wishes lengthen as our sun declines.
No wish should loiter, then, this side the grave.
Our hearts should leave the world before the knell
Calls for our carcasses to mend the soil.
Enough to live in tempest—die in port:
Age should fly concourse, cover in retreat

Defects of judgment, and the will subdue:
Walk thoughtful on the silent solemn shore
Of that vast ocean it must sail so soon,
And put good works on board, and wait the wind
That shortly blows us into worlds unknown:
If unconsidered, too, a dreadful scene!
All should be prophets to themselves—foresee
Their future fate—their future fate foretaste:
This art would waste the bitterness of death.
The thought of death alone the fear destroys:
A disaffection to that precious thought
Is more than midnight darkness on the soul,
Which sleeps beneath it on a precipice,
Puffed off by the first blast, and lost for ever.
Dost ask, Lorenzo, why so warmly prest,
By repetition hammered on thine ear,
The thought of Death? that thought is the machine,
The grand machine, that heaves us from the dust,
And rears us into men. The thought, ply'd home,
Will soon reduce the ghastly precipice
O'erhanging hell, will soften the descent,
And gently slope our passage to the grave.
How warmly to be wish'd; what heart of flesh
Would trifle with tremendous? dare extremes?
Yawn over the fate of infinite? what hand,
Beyond the blackest brand of censure bold,
(To speak a language too well known to thee)
Would at a moment give its all to Chance,
And stamp the dye for an Eternity.
Aid me, Narcissa; aid me to keep pace
With Destiny, and, ere her scissars cut
My thread of life, to break this tougher thread
Of moral death that ties me to the world.
Sting thou my slumbering Reason, to send forth
A thought of observation on the foe;
To sally and survey the rapid march
Of his ten thousand messengers to man,
Who, Jehu-like, behind him turns them all.
All accident apart, by Nature sign'd,
My warrant is gone out, though dormant yet;
Perhaps behind one moment lurks my fate.
Must I then forward only look for Death?—
Backward I turn mine eye, and find him there.
Man is a self-survivor every year.
Man, like a stream, is in perpetual flow.
Death's a destroyer of quotidian prey:
My youth, my noon-tide his—my yesterday:
The bold invader shares the present hour:
Each moment on the former shuts the grave.
While man is growing, life is in decrease,
And cradles rock us nearer to the tomb.
Our birth is nothing but our death begun,
As tapers waste that instant they take fire.
Shall we then fear lest that should come to pass,
Which comes to pass each moment of our lives?
If fear we must, let that Death turn us pale
Which murders strength and ardour; what remains
Should rather call on Death than dread his call.
Ye partners of my fault, and my decline,
Thoughtless of death but when your neighbour's knell,
(Rude visitant) knocks hard at your dull sense,
And with its thunder scarce obtains your ear.
Be death your theme, in every place and hour;
Nor longer want, ye monumental sires,
A brother-tomb to tell you—you shall die.
That death you dread, (so great is Nature's skill;)
Know you shall court, before you shall enjoy.
But you are learned: in volumes deep you sit,
In wisdom shallow. Pompous ignorance!
Would you be still more learned than the learned?
Learn well to know how much need not be known,
And what that knowledge which impairs your sense.
Our needful knowledge, like our needful food,
Unhedg'd, lies open in Life's common field,
And bids all welcome to the vital feast.
You scorn what lies before you in the page
Of Nature and Experience, moral truth;
Of indispensable eternal fruit;
Fruit on which mortals feeding, turn to gods,
And dive in science for distinguish'd names,
Dishonest fomentation of your pride,
Sinking in virtue as you rise in fame.
Your learning, like the lunar beam, affords
Light, but not heat; it leaves you undevout,
Frozen at heart while speculation shines.
Awake, ye curious Indagators! fond
Of knowing all but what avails you, known.
If you would learn Death's character, attend.
All casts of conduct, all degrees of health.
All dyes of fortune, and all dates of age,
Together shook in his impartial urn,
Come forth at random: or, if choice is made,
The choice is quite sarcastic, and insults
All bold conjecture and fond hopes of man.
What countless multitudes not only leave,
But deeply disappoint us, by their deaths!
Though great our sorrow, greater our surprise.
Like other tyrants, Death delights to smite
What, smitten, most proclaims the pride of power
And arbitrary nod. His joy supreme,
To bid the wretch survive the fortunate;
The feeble wrap the athletic in his shroud;
And weeping fathers build their children's tomb:
Me thine, Narcissa!—What, though short thy date?
Virtue, not rolling suns, the mind matures.
That life is long which answers life's great end.
The time that bears no fruit deserves no name.
The man of wisdom is the man of years.
In hoary youth Methusalems may die;
O how misdated on their flattering tombs;
Narcissa's youth has lectured me thus far.
And can her gaiety give counsel too?
That like the Jews' famed oracle of gems

Sparkles instruction; such as throws new light,
And opens more the character of Death,
Ill known to thee, Lorenzo! this thy vaunt!—
'Give death his due, the wretched and the old;
Ev'n let him sweep his rubbish to the grave;
Let him not violate kind nature's laws,
But own man born to live as well as die,'—
Wretched and old thou giv'st him; young and gay
He takes; and plunder is a tyrant's joy.
What if I prove, 'the farthest from the fear
Are often nearest to the stroke of fate?'
All, more than common, menaces an end.
A blaze betokens brevity of life:
As if bright embers should emit a flame,
Glad spirits sparkled from Narcissa's eye,
And made Youth younger, and taught life to live.
As natures opposites wage endless war,
For this offence, as treason to the deep
Inviolable stupor of his reign,
Where lust and turbulent ambition sleep,
Death took swift vengeance. As he life detests,
More life is still more odious; and, reduced
By conquest, aggrandizes more his power.
But wherefore aggrandized?—By Heaven's decree
To plant the soul on her eternal guard,
In awful expectation of our end.
Thus runs Death's dread commission; 'Strike, but so
As most alarms the living by the dead.'
Hence stratagem delights him, and surprise,
And cruel sport with man's securities.
Not simple conquest, triumph is his aim;
And where least feared, there conquest triumphs most.
This proves my bold assertion not too bold.
What are his arts to lay our fears asleep?
Tiberian arts his purposes wrap up
In deep Dissimulation's darkest night.
Like princes unconfess'd in foreign courts,
Who travel under cover, Death assumes
The name and look of Life, and dwells among us:
He takes all shapes that serve his black designs:
Though master of a wider empire far
Than that o'er which the Roman eagle flew,
Like Nero, he's a fiddler, charioteer:
Or drives his phaëton in female guise;
Quite unsuspected, till, the wheel beneath,
His disarray'd oblation he devours.
He most affects the forms least like himself,
His slender self: hence burly corpulence
Is his familiar wear, and sleek disguise.
Behind the rosy bloom he loves to lurk,
Or ambush in a smile; or, wanton, dive
In dimples deep; Love's eddies, which draw in
Unwary hearts, and sink them in despair.
Such on Narcissa's couch he loitered long
Unknown, and when detected, still was seen
To smile: such peace has Innocence in death!
Most happy they, whom least his arts deceive!
One eye on death, and one full fixed on heaven,
Becomes a mortal and immortal man.
Long on his wiles a piqued and jealous spy,
I've seen, or dreamed I saw, the tyrant dress,
Lay by his horrors, and put on his smiles.
Say, Muse! for thou remember'st, call it back,
And show Lorenzo the surprising scene;
If 'twas a dream, his genius can explain.

'Twas in a circle of the gay I stood:
Death would have entered; Nature pushed him back:
Supported by a doctor of renown,
His point he gained; then artfully dismissed
The sage; for Death designed to be concealed:
He gave an old vivacious usurer
His meagre aspect, and his naked bones,
In gratitude for plumping up his prey,
A pampered spendthrift, whose fantastic air,
Well-fashioned figure, and cockaded brow,
He took in change, and underneath the pride
Of costly linen tucked his filthy shroud.
His crooked bow he straightened to a cane,
And hid his deadly shafts in Myra's eye.
The dreadful masquerader, thus equipped,
Out-sallies on adventures. Ask you where?
Where is he not? For his peculiar haunts
Let this suffice; sure as night follows day,
Death treads in Pleasure's footsteps round the world
When Pleasure treads the paths which Reason shuns.
When against Reason, Riot shuts the door,
And gaiety supplies the place of sense,
Then foremost at the banquet and the ball,
Death leads the dance, or stamps the deadly dye,
Nor ever fails the midnight bowl to crown.
Gaily carousing to his gay compeers
Inly he laughs to see them laugh at him,
As absent far; and when the revel burns,
When Fear is banished, and triumphant Thought
Calling for all the joys beneath the moon,
Against him turns the key, and bids him sup
With their progenitors—he drops his mask,
Frowns out at full: they start, despair, expire.

Scarce with more sudden terror and surprise,
From his black mask of nitre, touched by fire,
He bursts, expands, roars, blazes, and devours.
And is not this triumphant treachery,
And more than simple conquest in the fiend?

And now, Lorenzo, dost thou wrap thy soul
In soft security, because unknown
Which moment is commissioned to destroy?
In death's uncertainty thy danger lies:
Is death uncertain? therefore thou be fixed,
Fixed as a sentinel, all eye, all ear,
All expectation of the coming foe.
Rouse, stand in arms, nor lean against thy spear
Lest slumber steal one moment o'er thy soul,

And Fate surprise thee nodding. Watch, be strong,
Thus give each day the merit and renown
Of dying well, though doomed but once to die;
Nor let life's period, hidden, (as from most)
Hide, too, from thee the precious use of life.
Early, not sudden, was Narcissa's fate;
Soon, not surprising, Death his visit paid:
Her thought went forth to meet him on his way,
Nor Gaiety forgot it was to die.
Though Fortune, too, (our third and final theme,)
As an accomplice, played her gaudy plumes,
And every glittering gewgaw, on her sight,
To dazzle and debauch it from its mark.
Death's dreadful advent is the mark of man,
And every thought that misses it is blind.
Fortune with Youth and Gaiety conspired
To weave a triple wreath of happiness,
(If happiness on earth) to crown her brow:
And could Death charge through such a shining shield?

That shining shield invites the tyrant's spear,
As if to damp our elevated aims,
And strongly preach humility to man.
O how portentous is prosperity!
How, comet-like, it threatens while it shines!
Few years but yield us proof of Death's ambition,
To cull his victims from the fairest fold,
And sheathe his shafts in all the pride of life.
When flooded with abundance, purpled o'er
With recent honours, bloomed with every bliss,
Set up in ostentation, made the gaze,
The gaudy centre of the public eye;
When Fortune, thus, has tossed her child in air
Snatched from the covert of an humble state,
How often have I seen him dropt at once,
Our morning's envy! and our evening's sigh!
As if her bounties were the signal given,
The flowery wreath, to mark the sacrifice,
And call Death's arrows on the destined prey.

High Fortune seems in cruel league with Fate.
Ask you for what? to give his war on man
The deeper dread, and more illustrious spoil;
Thus to keep daring mortals more in awe.
And burns Lorenzo still for the sublime
Of life? to hang his airy nest on high,
On the slight timber of the topmost bough,
Rocked at each breeze, and menacing a fall?
Granting grim Death at equal distance there,
Yet peace begins just where ambition ends.
What makes man wretched? happiness denied?
Lorenzo! no; 'tis happiness disdained!
She comes too meanly dressed to win our smile,
And calls herself Content, a homely name!
Our flame is transport, and Content our scorn!
Ambition turns, and shuts the door against her,
And weds a toil, a tempest, in her stead;
A tempest to warm transport near of kin.
Unknowing what our mortal state admits,
Life's modest joys we ruin while we raise,
And all our ecstasies are wounds to peace;
Peace, the full portion of mankind below.

And since thy peace is dear, ambitious youth!
Of fortune fond! as thoughtless of thy fate!
As late I drew Death's picture, to stir up
Thy wholesome fears; now, drawn in contrast, see
Gay Fortune's, thy vain hopes to reprimand.
See, high in air the sportive goddess hangs,
Unlocks her casket, spreads her glittering ware,
And calls the giddy winds to puff abroad
Her random bounties o'er the gaping throng.
All rush rapacious; friends o'er trodden friends,
Sons o'er their fathers, subjects o'er their kings,
Priests o'er their gods, and lovers o'er the fair
(Still more adored) to snatch the golden shower.

Gold glitters most where virtue shines no more,
As stars from absent suns have leave to shine.
O what a precious pack of votaries,
Unkennelled from the prisons and the stews,
Pour in, all opening in their idol's praise!
All, ardent, eye each wafture of her hand,
And, wide-expanding their voracious jaws,
Morsel on morsel swallow down unchewed,
Untasted, through mad appetite for more
Gorged to the throat, yet lean and ravenous still:
Sagacious all to trace the smallest game,
And bold to seize the greatest. If (blest chance!)
Court-zephyrs sweetly breathe; they launch, they fly,
O'er just, o'er sacred, all-forbidden ground,
Drunk with the burning scent of place or power,
Staunch to the foot of Lucre—till they die.

Or, if for men you take them, as I mark
Their manners, thou their various fates survey.
With aim mismeasured and impetuous speed,
Some, darting, strike their ardent wish far off,
Through fury to possess it: some succeed,
But stumble, and let fall the taken prize.
From some, by sudden blasts, 'tis whirled away,
And lodged in bosoms that ne'er dreamed of gain
To some it sticks so close, that, when torn off,
Torn is the man, and mortal is the wound.
Some, o'er-enamoured of their bags, run mad;
Groan under gold, yet weep for want of bread.
Together some (unhappy rivals!) seize,
And rend abundance into poverty;
Loud croaks the raven of the law, and smiles:
Smiles, too, the goddess; but smiles most at those
(Just victims of exorbitant desire!)
Who perish at their own request, and, whelmed
Beneath her load of lavish grants, expire.
Fortune is famous for her numbers slain;
The number small which happiness can bear.
Though various for awhile their fates, at last
One curse involves them all: at Death's approach
All read their riches backward into loss,
And mourn in just proportion to their store.

And Death's approach (if orthodox my song)

Is hastened by the lure of Fortune's smiles.
And art thou still a glutton of bright gold?
And art thou still rapacious of thy ruin?
Death loves a shining mark, a signal blow;
A blow which, while it executes, alarms,
And startles thousands with a signal fall.
As when some stately growth of oak, or pine,
Which nods aloft and proudly spreads her shade,
The sun's defiance, and the flock's defence,
By the strong strokes of labouring hinds subdued,
Loud groans her last; and, rushing from her height,
In cumbrous ruin thunders to the ground;
The conscious forest trembles at the shock,
And hill, and stream, and distant dale, resound.
These high-aimed darts of Death, and these alone,
Should I collect, my quiver would be full;
A quiver which, suspended in mid air,
Or near Heaven's archer, in the zodiac, hung,
(So could it be) should draw the public eye,
The gaze and contemplation of mankind!
A constellation awful, yet benign,
To guide the way through life's tempestuous wave,
Nor suffer them to strike the common rock;
'From greater danger to grow more secure,
And, wrapt in happiness, forget their fate.'
Lysander, happy past the common lot,
Was warned of danger, but too gay to fear.
He wooed the fair Aspasia; she was kind.
In youth, form, fortune, fame, they both were blessed:
All who knew, envied; yet in envy loved:
Can Fancy form more finished happiness?
Fixed was the nuptial hour. Her stately dome
Rose on the sounding beach. The glittering spires
Float in the wave, and break against the shore;
So break those glittering shadows, human joys.
The faithless morning smiled: he takes his leave
To re-embrace, in ecstacies, at eve:
The rising storm forbids: the news arrives;
Untold she saw it in her servant's eye.
She felt it seen, (her heart was apt to feel)
And drowned, without the furious ocean's aid,
In suffocating sorrows shares his tomb.
Now round the sumptuous bridal monument
The guilty billows innocently roar,
And the rough sailor passing, drops a tear.
A tear?—can tears suffice?—but not for me.
How vain our efforts! and our arts how vain!
The distant train of thought I took, to shun,
Has thrown me on my fate.—These died together;
Happy in ruin! undivorced by death!
Or ne'er to meet, or ne'er to part, is peace.—
Narcissa! Pity bleeds at thought of thee;
Yet thou wast only near me, not myself.
Survive myself?—that cures all other wo.
Narcissa lives; Philander is forgot.
O the soft commerce!—O the tender ties,
Close twisted with the fibres of the heart!
Which, broken, break them, and drain off the soul
Of human joy, and make it pain to live.—
And is it then to live? When such friends part,
'Tis the survivor dies.—My heart! no more.

NIGHT VI.

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

In Two Parts.

CONTAINING THE NATURE, PROOF, AND IMPORTANCE, OF IMMORTALITY.

PART I.

WHERE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, GLORY AND RICHES ARE PARTICULARLY CONSIDERED.

To the Right Hon. Henry Pelham, First Lord Commissioner of the Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

PREFACE.

Few ages have been deeper in dispute about religion than this. The dispute about religion, and the practice of it, seldom go together. The shorter, therefore, the dispute, the better. I think it may be reduced to this single question, 'Is man immortal, or is he not? If he is not; all our disputes are mere amusements, or trials of skill. In this case, truth, reason, religion, which give our discourses such pomp and solemnity, are (as will be shown,) mere empty sounds, without any meaning in them: but if man is immortal, it will behove him to be very serious about eternal consequences; or, in other words, to be truly religious. And this great fundamental truth, unestablished, or unawakened in the minds of men, is, I conceive, the real source and support of all our infidelity, how remote soever the particular objections advanced may seem to be from it.

Sensible appearances affect most men much more than abstract reasonings; and we daily see bodies drop around us, but the soul is invisible. The power which inclination has over the judgment, is greater than can be well conceived by those that have not had the experience of it; and of what numbers is it the sad interest that souls should not survive? The Heathen world confessed that they rather hoped, than firmly believed, immortality! and how many Heathens have we still amongst us? The Sacred page assures us, that 'life and immortality is brought to light by the Gospel:' but by how many is the Gospel rejected or overlooked? From these considerations, and from my being, accidentally, privy to the sentiments of some particular persons, I have been long persuaded that most, if not all our infidels (whatever name they take, and whatever scheme for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronize,) are supported in their deplorable error by some doubt of their immortality

at the bottom: and I am satisfied, that men once thoroughly convinced of their immortality, are not far from being Christians: for it is hard to conceive that a man, fully conscious eternal pain or happiness will certainly be his lot, should not earnestly and impartially inquire after the surest means of escaping one, and securing the other: and of such an earnest and impartial inquiry I well know the consequence.

Here, therefore, in proof of this most fundamental truth, some plain arguments are offered; arguments derived from principles which infidels admit in common with believers; arguments which appear to me altogether irresistible; and such as, I am satisfied, will have great weight with all who give themselves the small trouble of looking seriously into their own bosoms, and of observing, with any tolerable degree of attention, what daily passes round about them in the world. If some arguments shall here occur which others have declined, they are submitted, with all deference, to better judgments, in this, of all points, the most important! for, as to the being of a God, that is no longer disputed; but it is undisputed for this reason only, viz. because where the least pretence to reason is admitted, it must for ever be indisputable; and, of consequence, no man can be betrayed into a dispute of that nature by vanity, which has a principal share in animating our modern combatants against other articles of our belief.

She* (for I know not yet her name in Heaven)
Not early, like Narcissa, left the scene,
Nor sudden, like Philander. What avail?
This seeming mitigation but inflames;
This fancied medicine heightens the disease.
The longer known, the closer still she grew,
And gradual parting is a gradual death.
'Tis the grim tyrant's engine which extorts,
By tardy pressure's still increasing weight,
From hardest hearts confession of distress.
O the long dark approach, through years of pain,
Death's gallery! (might I dare to call it so)
With dismal doubt and sable terror hung,
Sick Hope's pale lamp its only glimmering ray:
There Fate my melancholy walk ordained,
Forbid self-love itself to flatter there.
How oft I gazed, prophetically sad:
How oft I saw her dead, while yet in smiles:
In smiles she sunk her grief to lessen mine:
She spoke me comfort, and increased my pain.
Like powerful armies trenching at a town,
By slow and silent, but resistless sap,
In his pale progress gently gaining ground,
Death urged his deadly siege; in spite of art,
Of all the balmy blessings Nature lends
To succour frail humanity, Ye stars!
(Not now first made familiar to my sight)
And thou, O moon! bear witness; many a night
He tore the pillow from beneath my head,
Tied down my sore attention to the shock,
By ceaseless depredations on a life
Dearer than that he left me. Dreadful post
Of observation! darker every hour;
Less dread the day that drove me to the brink,
And pointed at eternity below;
When my soul shuddered at futurity;
When, on a moment's point, the important die
Of life and death spun doubtful, ere it fell,
And turn'd up life; my title to more wo.
But why more wo? more comfort let it be.
Nothing is dead, but that which wished to die
Nothing is dead, but wretchedness and pain;
Nothing is dead, but what incumbered, galled,
Blocked up the pass, and barred from real life.
Where dwells that wish most ardent of the wise?
Too dark the sun to see it; highest stars
Too low to reach it; Death, great Death alone,
O'er stars and sun triumphant, lands us there.
Nor dreadful our transition, though the mind,
An artist at creating, self-alarms,
Rich in expedients for inquietude,
Is prone to paint it dreadful. Who can take
Death's portrait true? the tyrant never sat.
Our sketch all random strokes, conjecture all;
Close shuts the grave, nor tells one single tale.
Death and his image rising in the brain
Bear faint resemblance; never are alike:
Fear shakes the pencil: Fancy loves excess;
Dark Ignorance is lavish of her shades;
And these the formidable picture draw.
But grant the worst, 'tis the past; new prospects rise,
And drop a veil eternal o'er her tomb.
Far other views our contemplation claim,
Views that o'erpay the rigours of our life;
Views that suspend our agonies in death.
Wrapt in the thought of immortality,
Wrapt in the single, the triumphant thought:
Long life might lapse, age unperceived, come on,
And find the soul unsated with her theme.
Its nature, proof, importance, fire my song.
O that my song could emulate my soul!
Like her immortal. No:—the soul disdains
A mark so mean; far nobler hope inflames;
If endless ages can outweigh an hour,
Let not the laurel, but the palm inspire.
Thy nature Immortality! who knows?
And yet who knows it not? it is but life
In stronger thread of brighter colour spun,
And spun for ever; dipt by cruel Fate
In Stygian dye, how black, how brittle, here;
How short our correspondence with the sun!
And while it lasts, inglorious: our best deeds
How wanting in their weight: our highest joys,

* Referring to Night the Fifth.

Small cordials to support us in our pain,
And give us strength to suffer. But how great
To mingle interests, converse, amities,
With all the sons of Reason, scattered wide
Through habitable space, wherever born,
Howe'er endowed: to live free citizens
Of universal Nature: to lay hold,
By more that feeble faith, on the Supreme:
To call Heaven's rich unfathomable mines
(Mines which support archangels in their state)
Our own! to rise in science as in bliss,
Initiate in the secrets of the skies:
To read creation; read its mighty plan
In the bare bosom of the Deity:
The plan and execution to collate:
To see before each glance of piercing thought,
All cloud, all shadow, blown remote; and leave
No mystery—but that of love Divine,
Which lifts us on the seraph's flaming wing,
From earth's aceldama, this field of blood,
Of inward anguish, and of outward ill,
From darkness and from dust, to such a scene:
Love's element: true joy's illustrious home:
From earth's sad contrast (now deplored) more fair!
What exquisite vicissitude of fate!
Blessed absolution of our blackest hour!
Lorenzo! these are thoughts that make man man,
The wise illumine, aggrandize the great.
How great, (while yet we tread the kindred clod,
And every moment fear to sink beneath
The clod we tread, soon trodden by our sons)
How great, in the wild whirl of time's pursuits,
To stop, and pause; involved in high presage,
Through the long vista of a thousand years,
To stand contemplating our distant selves,
As in a magnifying mirror seen,
Enlarged, ennobled, elevate, divine:
To prophesy our own futurities:
To gaze in thought on what all thought transcends:
To talk, with fellow-candidates, of joys
As far beyond conception as desert,
Ourselves the astonished talkers and the tale!
Lorenzo, swells thy bosom at the thought?
The swell becomes thee: 'tis an honest pride:
Revere thyself;—and yet thyself despise.
His nature no man can o'er-rate, and none
Can under-rate his merit. Take good heed,
Nor there be modest where thou should'st be proud;
That almost universal error shun.
How just our pride, when we behold those heights:
Not those ambition paints in air, but those
Reason points out, and ardent Virtue gains,
And angels emulate. Our pride how just:
When mount we? when these shackles cast? when quit
This cell of the creation? this small nest,
Stuck in a corner of the universe,
Wrapt up in fleecy cloud and fine-spun air?
Fine-spun to sense, but gross and feculent
To souls celestial; souls ordained to breathe
Ambrosial gales, and drink a purer sky;
Greatly triumphant on Time's farther shore,
Where Virtue reigns, enriched with full arrears,
While Pomp imperial, begs an alms of Peace.
In empire high, or in proud science deep,
Ye born of earth, on what can you confer,
With half the dignity, with half the gain,
The gust, the glow, of rational delight,
As on this theme, which angels praise and share?
Man's fates and favours are a theme in Heaven.
What wretched repetition cloys us here:
What periodic potions for the sick:
Distempered bodies and distempered minds:
In an eternity what scenes shall strike!
Adventures thicken; novelties surprise:
What webs of wonder shall unravel there?
What full day pour on all the paths of Heaven,
And light the Almighty's footsteps in the deep:
How shall the blessed day of our discharge
Unwind, at once, the labyrinths of fate,
And straighten its inextricable maze.
If inextinguishable thirst in man
To know; how rich, how full, our banquet there
There, not the moral world alone unfolds;
The world material, lately seen in shades,
And in those shades by fragments only seen,
And seen those fragments by the labouring eye,
Unbroken, then, illustrious and entire,
Its ample sphere, its universal frame,
In full dimensions, swells to the survey,
And enters, at one glance, the ravished sight.
From some superior point, (where, who can tell?
Suffice it 'tis a point where gods reside)
How shall the stranger man's illumined eye,
In the vast ocean of unbounded space,
Behold an infinite of floating worlds
Divide the crystal waves of ether pure,
In endless voyage without port? The least
Of these disseminated orbs how great
Great as they are, what numbers these surpass,
Huge as leviathan to that small race,
Those twinkling multitudes of little life,
He swallows unperceived. Stupendous these.
Yet what are these stupendous to the whole?
As particles, as atoms, ill perceived;
As circulating globules in our veins;
So vast the plan. Fecundity divine!
Exuberant Source! perhaps I wrong thee still.
If admiration is a source of joy,
What transport hence! yet this the least in Heaven.
What this to that illustrious robe He wears,
Who tossed this mass of wonders from his hand,
A specimen, an earnest of his power?

'Tis to that glory, whence all glory flows,
As the mead's meanest floweret to the sun,
Which gave it birth. But what this sun of Heaven?
This bliss supreme of the supremely blest?
Death, only death, the question can resolve.
By death cheap bought the ideas of our joy;
The bare ideas! solid happiness
So distant from its shadow chased below.
And chase we still the phantom through the fire,
O'er bog, and brake, and precipice, till death?
And toil we still for sublunary pay?
Defy the dangers of the field and flood,
Or, spider-like, spin out our precious all,
Our more than vitals spin, (if no regard
To great futurity) in curious webs
Of subtle thought and exquisite design,
(Fine net-work of the brain!) to catch a fly!
The momentary buzz of vain renown!
A name! a mortal immortality!
Or (meaner still) instead of grasping air,
For sordid lucre plunge we in the mire?
Drudge, sweat, through every shame, for every gain:
For vile contaminating trash! throw up
Our hope in Heaven, our dignity with man,
And deify the dirt matured to gold?
Ambition, Avarice, the two demons these
Which goad through every slough our human herd,
Hard-travelled from the cradle to the grave.
How low the wretches stoop! how steep they climb!
These demons burn mankind, but most possess
Lorenzo's bosom, and turn out the skies.
Is it in time to hide eternity?
And why not in an atom on the shore
To cover ocean? or a mote, the sun?
Glory and wealth! have they this blinding power?
What if to them I prove Lorenzo blind?
Would it surprise thee? be thou then surprised;
Thou neither know'st: their nature learn from me.
Mark well, as foreign as these subjects seem,
What close connexion ties them to my theme.
First, what is true ambition? The pursuit
Of glory nothing less than man can share.
Were they as vain as gaudy-minded man,
As flatulent with fumes of self-applause,
Their arts and conquests animals might boast,
And claim their laurel-crowns as well as we,
But not celestial. Here we stand alone,
As in our form distinct, pre-eminent:
If prone in thought, our stature is our shame:
And man should blush his forehead meets the skies.
The visible and present are for brutes:
A slender portion, and a narrow bound!
These Reasons, with an energy divine,
O'erleaps, and claims the future and unseen,
The vast unseen! the future fathomless!
When the great soul buoys up to this high point,
Leaving gross Nature's sediments below,
Then, and then only, Adam's offspring quits
The sage and hero of the fields and woods
Asserts his rank, and rises into man.
This is ambition; this is human fire!
Can parts or place (two bold pretenders) make
Lorenzo great, and pluck him from the throng?
Genius and art, ambition's boasted wings,
Our boast but ill deserve: a feeble aid!
Dedalian enginery! If these alone
Assist our flight, Fame's flight is Glory's fall.
Heart-merit wanting, mount we ne'er so high,
Our height is but the gibbet of our name.
A celebrated wretch when I behold,
When I behold a genius bright and base,
Of towering talents and terrestrial aims,
Methinks I see, as thrown from her high sphere,
The glorious fragments of a soul immortal,
With rubbish mixed, and glittering in the dust:
Struck at the splendid melancholy sight,
At once compassion soft and envy rise——
But wherefore envy? talents angel-bright,
If wanting worth, are shining instruments
In false Ambition's hand, to finish faults
Illustrious, and give Infamy renown.
Great ill is an achievement of great powers.
Plain sense but rarely leads us far astray.
Reason the means, Affections choose our end.
Means have no merit, if our end amiss.
If wrong our hearts, our heads are right in vain.
What is a Pelham's head to Pelham's heart?
Hearts are proprietors of all applause.
Right ends and means make wisdom, Worldly-wise
Is but half-witted at its highest praise.
Let genius, then, despair to make thee great,
Nor flatter station. What is station high?
'Tis a proud mendicant: it boasts and begs:
It begs an alms of homage from the throng,
And oft the throng denies its charity.
Monarchs and ministers are awful names!
Whoever wear them challenge our devoir.
Religion, public Order, both exact
External homage and a supple knee,
To beings pompously set up, to serve
The meanest slave: all more is Merit's due,
Her sacred and inviolable right;
Nor ever paid the monarch, but the man.
Our hearts never bow but to superior worth;
Nor ever fail of their allegiance there.
Fools, indeed, drop the man in their account,
And vote the mantle into majesty.
Let the small savage boast his silver fur,
His royal robe, unborrowed and unbought,
His own, descending fairly from his sires;
Shall man be proud to wear his livery,

And souls in ermine scorn a soul without?
Can place or lessen us or aggrandize?
Pigmies are pigmies still, though perched on Alps,
And pyramids are pyramids in vales.
Each man makes his own stature, builds himself.
Virtue alone outbuilds the pyramids;
Her monuments shall last, when Egypt's fall.

Of these sure truths dost thou demand the cause?
The cause is lodged in immortality.
Hear, and assent. Thy bosom burns for power;
What station charms thee? I'll install thee there;
'Tis thine. And art thou greater than before?
Then thou before wast something less than man.
Has thy new post betrayed thee into pride?
That treacherous pride betrays thy dignity;
That pride defames humanity, and calls
The being mean which staffs or strings can raise;
That pride, like hooded hawks, in darkness soars,
From blindness bold, and towering to the skies.
'Tis born of Ignorance, which knows not man:
An angel's second, nor his second long.
A Nero, quitting his imperial throne,
And courting glory from the tinkling string
But faintly shadows an immortal soul,
With empire's self to pride or rapture fired.
If nobler motives minister no cure,
Even vanity forbids thee to be vain.

High worth is elevated place: 'tis more,
It makes the post stand candidate for thee;
Makes more than monarchs, makes an honest man.
Though no exchequer it commands, 'tis wealth;
And, though it wears no ribbon, 'tis renown:
Renown that would not quit thee, though disgraced,
Nor leave thee pendent on a master's smile.
Other ambition Nature interdicts;
Nature proclaims it most absurd in man,
By pointing at his origin and end;
Milk and a swathe, at first, his whole demand;
His whole domain, at last, a turf or stone;
To whom, between, a world may seem too small.

Souls, truly great, dart forward on the wing
Of just Ambition, to the grand result,
The curtain's fall; there see the buskined chief
Unshod behind his momentary scene,
Reduced to his own stature, low or high,
As vice or virtue sinks him, or sublimes;
And laugh at this fantastic mummery,
This antic prelude of grotesque events,
Where dwarfs are often stilted, and betray
A littleness of soul by worlds o'er-run,
And nations laid in blood. Dread sacrifice
To Christian pride! which had with horror shocked
The darkest Pagans, offered to their gods.

O thou most Christian enemy to peace!
Again in arms? again provoking Fate?
That prince, and that alone, is truly great,
Who draws the sword reluctant, gladly sheathes;
On empire builds what empire far outweighs,
And makes his throne a scaffold to the skies!

Why this so rare?—because, forgot of all
The day of death, that venerable day
Which sits as judge; that day which shall pronounce
On all our days, absolve them, or condemn.
Lorenzo! never shut thy thought against it:
Be levees ne'er so full, afford it room;
And give it audience in the cabinet.
That friend consulted, flatteries apart,
Will tell thee fair if thou art great or mean.

To dote on aught may leave us, or be left,
Is that ambition? then let flames descend,
Point to the centre their inverted spires,
And learn humiliation from a soul
Which boasts her lineage from celestial fire.
Yet these are they the world pronounces wise:
The world, which cancels Nature's right and wrong,
And casts new wisdom: ev'n the grave man lends
His solemn face to countenance the coin.
Wisdom for parts is madness to the whole.
This stamps the paradox, and gives us leave
To call the wisest weak, the richest poor,
The most ambitious unambitious, mean,
In triumph mean, and abject on a throne.
Nothing can make it less than mad in man
To put forth all his ardour, all his art,
And give his soul her full unbounded flight,
But reaching Him who gave her wings to fly.
When blind ambition quite mistakes her road,
And downward pores for that which shines above.
Substantial happiness and true renown;
Then, like an idiot gazing on the brook,
We leap at stars, and fasten in the mud;
At glory grasp, and sink in infamy.

Ambition! powerful source of good and ill!
Thy strength in man, like length of wing in birds,
When disengaged from earth with greater ease,
And swifter flight, transports us to the skies:
By toys entangled, in guilt bemired,
It turns a curse; it is our chain and scourge,
In this dark dungeon, where, confined we lie,
Close-grated by the sordid bars of sense,
All prospect of eternity shut out,
And, but for execution, ne'er set free.

With error in ambition justly charged,
Find we Lorenzo wiser in his wealth?
What if thy rental I reform, and draw
An inventory new to set thee right?
Where thy true treasure? Gold says, 'Not in me;
And, 'Not in me,' the Diamond. Gold is poor;
India's insolvent: seek it in thyself;
Seek in thy naked self, and find it there;
In being so descended, formed, endowed;
Sky-born, sky-guided, sky-returning race!
Erect, immortal, rational, divine!
In senses, which inherit earth and Heavens;

Enjoy the various riches Nature yields:
Far nobler! give the riches they enjoy;
Give taste to fruits, and harmony to groves;
Their radiant beams to gold, and gold's bright sire;
Take in, at once, the landscape of the world,
At a small inlet which a grain might close,
And half create the wondrous world they see;
Our senses, as our reason, are divine.
But for the magic organ's powerful charm,
Earth were a rude uncoloured chaos still.
Objects are but the' occasion, ours the' exploit;
Ours is the cloth, the pencil, and the paint,
Which Nature's admirable picture draws,
And beautifies Creation's ample dome.
Like Milton's Eve, when gazing on the lake,
Man makes the matchless image man admires.
Say then, shall man, his thoughts all sent abroad,
Superior wonders in himself forgot,
His admiration waste on objects round,
When Heaven makes him the soul of all he sees?
Absurd! not rare! so great, so mean, is man.
What wealth in senses such as these! what wealth
In fancy, fired to form a fairer scene
Than sense surveys! in Memory's firm record,
Which, should it perish, could this world recall
From the dark shadows of o'erwhelming years!
In colours fresh, originally bright,
Preserve its portrait, and report its fate!
What wealth in intellect! that sovereign power!
Which sense and fancy summons to the bar;
Interrogates, approves, or reprehends;
And from the mass those underlings import,
From their materials sifted and refined,
And in Truth's balance accurately weighed,
Forms art and science, government and law,
The solid basis, and the beauteous frame,
The vitals, and the grace of civil life!
And manners (sad exception!) set aside,
Strikes out, with master-hand, a copy fair
Of his idea, whose indulgent thought
Long, long ere Chaos teemed, planned human bliss.
What wealth in souls that soar, dive, range around,
Disdaining limit or from place or time,
And hear, at once, in thought extensive, hear
The' Almighty Fiat, and the trumpet's sound!
Bold, on Creation's outside walk, and view
What was, and is, and more than e'er shall be;
Commanding, with omnipotence of thought,
Creations new, in Fancy's field to rise!
Souls that can grasp whate'er the' Almighty made,
And wander wild through things impossible!
What wealth in faculties of endless growth,
In quenchless passions violent to crave,
In liberty to choose, in power to reach,
And in duration (how thy riches rise!)
Duration to perpetuate—boundless bliss!
Ask you what power resides in feeble man,
That bliss to gain? Is Virtue's, then, unknown?
Virtue! our present peace, our future prize.
Man's unprecarious, natural estate,
Improveable at will, in virtue lies;
Its tenure sure, its income is divine.
High-built abundance, heap on heap! for what?
To breed new wants, and beggar us the more,
Then make a richer scramble for the throng?
Soon as this feeble pulse, which leaps so long,
Almost by miracle, is tired with play,
Like rubbish, from disploding engines thrown,
Our magazines of hoarded trifles fly;
Fly diverse; fly to foreigners, to foes;
New masters court, and call the former fool,
(How justly!) for dependence on their stay.
Wide scatter, first, our playthings; then our dust.
Dost court abundance for the sake of peace?
Learn, and lament thy self-defeated scheme.
Riches enable to be richer still,
And richer still what mortal can resist?
Thus Wealth (a cruel task-master!) enjoins
New toils, succeeding toils, an endless train!
And murders Peace, which taught it first to shine.
The poor are half as wretched as the rich,
Whose proud and painful privilege it is
At once to bear a double load of wo,
To feel the stings of envy and of want,
Outrageous want! both Indies can not cure.
A competence is vital to Content;
Much wealth is corpulence, if not disease:
Sick, or incumbered, is our happiness.
A competence is all we can enjoy.
O be content, where Heaven can give no more!
More, like a flash of water from a lock,
Quickens our spirit's movement for an hour,
But soon its force is spent; nor rise our joys
Above our native temper's common stream.
Hence Disappointment lurks in every prize,
As bees in flowers, and stings us with success.
The rich man, who denies it, proudly feigns,
Nor knows the wise are privy to the lie.
Much learning shows how little mortals know;
Much wealth, how little worldlings can enjoy:
At best it babies us with endless toys,
And keeps us children till we drop to dust.
As monkeys at a mirror stand amazed,
They fail to find what they so plainly see:
Thus men, in shining riches, see the face
Of happiness, nor know it is a shade;
But gaze, and touch, and peep, and peep again
And wish, and wonder it is absent still.
How few can rescue opulence from want!
Who lives to nature rarely can be poor;
Who lives to fancy never can be rich.
Poor is the man in debt; the man of gold,
In debt to Fortune, trembles at her power:
The man of reason smiles at her and death.
O what a patrimony this! a being
Of such inherent strength and majesty,
Not worlds possest can raise it; worlds destroyed

Can't injure; which holds on its glorious course
When thine, O Nature! ends: too blest to mourn
Creation's obsequies. What treasure this!
The monarch is a beggar to the man.
Immortal! ages past, yet nothing gone!
Morn without eve! a race without a goal!
Unshortened by progression infinite!
Futurity for ever future! life
Beginning still where computation ends!
'Tis the description of a deity!
'Tis the description of the meanest slave!
The meanest slave dares then Lorenzo scorn?
The meanest slave thy sovereign glory shares.
Proud youth! fastidious of the lower world!
Man's lawful pride includes humility;
Stoops to the lowest; is too great to find
Inferiors! all immortal! brothers all!
Proprietors eternal of thy love!
Immortal! what can strike the sense so strong,
As this the soul? it thunders to the thought,
Reason amazes, gratitude o'erwhelms:
No more we slumber on the brink of Fate,
Roused at the sound, the' exulting soul ascends,
And breathes her native air, an air that feeds
Ambitions high, and fans ethereal fires;
Quick-kindles all that is divine within us,
Nor leaves one loitering thought beneath the stars.
Has not Lorenzo's bosom caught the flame?
Immortal! were but one immortal, how
Would others envy! how would thrones adore!
Because 'tis common, is the blessing lost?
How this ties up the bounteous hand of Heaven!
O vain, vain, vain, all else! eternity!
A glorious and a needful refuge that,
From vile imprisonment in abject views.
'Tis immortality, 'tis that alone,
Amid life's pains, abasements, emptiness,
The soul can comfort, elevate, and fill:
That only, and that amply, this performs;
Lifts us above life's pains, her joys above;
Their terror those, and these their lustre lose;
Eternity depending covers all;
Eternity depending all achieves;
Sets earth at distance; casts her into shades;
Blends her distinctions; abrogates her powers;
The low, the lofty, joyous, and severe,
Fortune's dread frowns, and fascinating smiles,
Make one promiscuous and neglected heap,
The man beneath; if I may call him man,
Whom Immortality's full force inspires.
Nothing terrestrial touches his high thought;
Suns shine unseen, and thunders roll unheard,
By minds quite conscious of their descent,
Their present province, and their future prize;
Divinely darting upward every wish,
Warm on the wing, in glorious absence lost!
Doubt you this truth? why labours your belief?
If earth's whole orb, by some due distant eye
Were seen at once, her towering Alps would sink,
And levelled Atlas leave an even sphere.
Thus earth, and all that earthly minds admire,
Is swallowed in Eternity's vast round.
To that stupendous view, when souls awake,
So large of late, so mountainous to man,
Time's toys subside, and equal all below.
Enthusiastic this?—then all are weak
But rank enthusiasts. To this godlike height
Some souls have soar'd, or martyrs ne'er had bled;
And all may do what has by man been done.
Who, beaten by these sublunary storms,
Boundless, interminable joys can weigh
Unraptured, unexalted, uninflamed?
What slave unblessed, who from to-morrow's dawn
Expects an empire? he forgets his chain,
And, throned in thought, his absent sceptre waves.
And what a sceptre waits us! what a throne!
Her own immense appointments to compute,
Or comprehend her high prerogatives,
In this her dark minority, how toils,
How vainly pants, the human soul divine!
Too great the bounty seems for earthly joy;
What heart but trembles at so strange a bliss?
In spite of all the truths the Muse has sung,
Ne'er to be prized enough! enough revolved!
Are there who wrapt the world so close about them,
They see no farther than the clouds, and dance
On heedless Vanity's fantastic toe,
Till, stumbling at a straw, in their career,
Headlong they plunge, where end both dance and song?
Are there, Lorenzo? is it possible?
Are there on earth (let me not call them men)
Who lodge a soul immortal in their breasts,
Unconscious as the mountain of its ore,
Or rock of its inestimable gem?
When rocks shall melt, and mountains vanish, these
Shall know their treasure; treasure then no more.
Are there (still more amazing!) who resist
The rising thought? who smother, in its birth,
The glorious truth? who struggle to be brutes?
Who through this bosom-barrier burst their way,
And, with reversed ambition, strive to sink!
Who labour downwards through the opposing powers
Of instinct, reason, and the world against them,
To dismal hopes, and shelter in the shock
Of endless night? night darker than the grave's?
Who fight the proofs of Immortality?
With horrid zeal, and execrable arts,
Work all their engines, level their black fires
To blot from man this attribute divine,
(Than vital blood far dearer to the wise)
Blasphemers, and rank atheists to themselves?
To contradict them, see all Nature rise!
What object, what event, the moon beneath
But argues, or endears, an after-scene?

To reason proves, or weds it to desire?
All things proclaim it needful; some advance
One precious step beyond, and prove it sure.
A thousand arguments swarm round my pen,
From Heaven, and earth, and man. Indulge a few,
By Nature, as her common habit, worn;
So pressing Providence a truth to teach,
Which truth untaught all other truths were vain.
Thou! whose all-providential eye surveys,
Whose hand directs, whose spirit fills and warms
Creation, and holds empire far beyond!
Eternity's Inhabitant august!
Of two eternities amazing Lord!
One past, ere man's or angel's had begun,
Aid! while I rescue from the foe's assault
Thy glorious immortality in man;
A theme for ever, and for all, of weight,
Of moment infinite! but relished most
By those who love thee most, who most adore.
Nature, thy daughter, ever-changing birth
Of thee the Great Immutable, to man
Speaks wisdom; is his oracle supreme;
And he who most consults her is most wise.
Lorenzo! to this heavenly Delphos haste,
And come back all-immortal, all-divine.
Look Nature through, 'tis revolution all;
All change, no death: day follows night, and night
The dying day: stars rise, and set, and rise:
Earth takes the example. See, the Summer gay,
With her green chaplet and ambrosial flowers,
Droops into pallid Autumn: Winter gray,
Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm,
Blows Autumn and his golden fruits away,
Then melts into the Spring: soft Spring, with breath
Favonian, from warm chambers of the south,
Recalls the first. All, to reflourish, fades:
As in a wheel, all sinks to reascend:
Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.
With this minute distinction, emblems just,
Nature revolves, but man advances; both
Eternal: that a circle, this a line:
That gravitates, this soars. The aspiring soul,
Ardent and tremulous, like flame, ascends,
Zeal and humility her wings, to Heaven.
The world of matter, with its various forms,
All dies into new life. Life born from Death
Rolls the vast mass, and shall for ever roll.
No single atom, once in being, lost,
With change of counsel charges the Most High.
What hence infers Lorenzo? can it be?
Matter immortal? and shall spirit die?
Above the nobler shall less noble rise?
Shall man alone, for whom all else revives,
No resurrection know? shall man alone,
Imperial man! be sown in barren ground,
Less privileged than grain on which he feeds?
Is man, in whom alone is power to prize
The bliss of being, or, with previous pain,
Deplore its period by the spleen of Fate,
Severely doom'd Death's single unredeemed?
If Nature's revolution speaks aloud
In her gradation, hear her louder still.
Look Nature through, 'tis neat gradation all.
By what minute degrees her scale ascends!
Each middle nature joined at each extreme;
To that above it joined, to that beneath.
Parts into parts reciprocally shot,
Abhor divorce. What love of union reigns!
Here dormant matter waits a call to life;
Half-life, half-death, join there: here life and sense,
There sense from reason steals a glimmering ray;
Reason shines out in man. But how preserv'd
The chain unbroken upward, to the realms
Of incorporeal life? those realms of bliss
Where Death hath no dominion? Grant a make
Half mortal, half immortal; earthy part,
And part ethereal: grant the soul of man
Eternal, or in man the series ends.
Wide yawns the gap; connection is no more;
Check'd reason halts; her next step wants support;
Striving to climb, she tumbles from her scheme,
A scheme Analogy pronounced so true;
Analogy—man's surest guide below.
Thus far all Nature calls on thy belief;
And will Lorenzo, careless of the call,
False attestation on all Nature charge,
Rather than violate his league with Death?
Renounce his reason rather than renounce
The dust belov'd, and run the risk of Heaven?
O what indignity to deathless souls!
What treason to the majesty of man!
Of man immortal! hear the lofty style:
'If so decreed, the Almighty Will be done.
Let earth dissolve, yon ponderous orbs descend,
And grind us into dust. The soul is safe;
The man emerges; mounts above the wreck,
As towering flame from Nature's funeral pyre;
O'er devastation, as a gainer, smiles;
His charter, his inviolable rights,
Well pleased to learn, from Thunder's impotence,
Death's pointless darts, and Hell's defeated storms.'
But these chimeras touch not thee, Lorenzo;
The glories of the world thy sevenfold shield.
Other ambition than of crowns in air,
And superlunary felicities,
Thy bosom warms. I'll cool it if I can;
And turn those glories that inchant against thee.
What ties thee to this life proclaims the next.
If wise, the cause that wounds thee is thy cure.
Come, my Ambitious! let us mount together,
(To mount Lorenzo never can refuse,)
And from the clouds, where Pride delights to dwell,
Look down on earth.—What seest thou? wondrous things!
Terrestrial wonders, that eclipse the skies.

What lengths of la'bour'd lands; what loaded seas!
Loaded by man for pleasure, wealth, or war!
Seas, winds, and planets into service brought,
His art acknowledge, and promote his ends.
Nor can the eternal rocks his will withstand:
What levell'd mountains! and what lifted vales!
O'er vales and mountains sumptuous cities swell,
And gild our landscape with their glittering spires.
Some 'mid the wondering waves majestic rise,
And Neptune holds a mirror to their charms.
Far greater still; (what can not mortal might?)
See wide dominions ravished from the deep:
The narrow'd deep with indignation foams.
Or southward turn, to delicate and grand,
The finer arts there ripen in the sun.
How the tall temples, as to meet their gods,
Ascend the skies! the proud triumphal arch
Shows half heaven beneath its ample bend.
High through mid air, here streams are taught to flow;
Whole rivers there, laid by in basins, sleep.
Here plains turn oceans; there vast oceans join
Through kingdoms channeled deep from shore to shore,
And changed Creation takes its face from man.
Beats thy brave breast for formidable scenes,
Where fame and empire wait upon the sword?
See fields in flood; hear naval thunders rise;
Britannia's voice! that awes the world to peace.
How yon enormous mole projecting breaks
The mid-sea, furious waves! their roar amidst
Out-speaks the Deity, and says, 'O Main!
Thus far, nor farther; new restraints obey.'
Earth's disemboweled! measured are the skies!
Stars are detected in their deep recess!
Creation widens! vanquished Nature yields!
Her secrets are extorted! Art prevails!
What monument of genius, spirit, power!
And now, Lorenzo, raptured at this scene,
Whose glories render Heaven superfluous! say,
Whose footsteps these?—Immortals have been here;
Could less than souls immortal this have done?
Earth's covered o'er with proof of souls immortal,
And proofs of Immortality forgot.
To flatter thy grand foible, I confess
These are Ambition's works; and these are great;
But this, the least immortal souls can do,
Transcends them all.—But what can these transcend?
Dost ask me what?—one sigh for the distressed.
What then for Infidels? a deeper sigh.
'Tis moral grandeur makes the mighty man:
How little they, who think aught great below?
All our ambitions Death defeats but one,
And that it crowns.—Here cease we; but, ere long,
More powerful proof shall take the field against thee,
Stronger than death, and smiling at the tomb.

NIGHT VII.

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

PART II.

CONTAINING THE NATURE, PROOF, AND IMPORTANCE OF IMMORTALITY.

PREFACE.

As we are at war with the power, it were well if we were at war with the manners, of France. A land of levity is a land of guilt. A serious mind is the native soil of every virtue, and the single character that does true honour to mankind. The soul's immortality has been the favourite theme with the serious of all ages. Nor is it strange: it is a subject by far the most interesting and important that can enter the mind of man. Of highest moment this subject always was, and always will be: yet this its highest moment seems to admit of increase at this day; a sort of occasional importance is superadded to the natural weight of it, if that opinion which is advanced in the Preface to the preceding Night be just. It is therefore supposed that all our Infidels, (whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronize) are betrayed into their deplorable error by some doubt of their immortality at the bottom: and the more I consider this point, the more I am persuaded of the truth of that opinion. Though the distrust of a futurity, is a strange error, yet it is an error into which bad men may naturally be distressed; for it is impossible to bid defiance to final ruin, without some refuge in imagination, some presumption of escape. And what presumption is there? there are but two in Nature; but two within the compass of human thought; and these are,—That either God will not or can not punish. Considering the divine attributes, the first is too gross to be digested by our strongest wishes; and since omnipotence is as much a divine attribute as holiness, that God can not punish, is as absurd a supposition as the former. God certainly can punish, as long as wicked men exist. In non-existence, therefore, is their only refuge; and, consequently, non-existence is their strongest wish: and strong wishes have a strange influence on our opinions; they bias the judgment in a manner almost incredible. And since, on this member of their alternative there are some very small appearances in their favour, and none at all on the other, they catch at this reed, they lay hold on this chimera, to save themselves from the shock and horror of an immediate and absolute despair

On reviewing my subject by the light which this argument, and others of like tendency, threw upon it, I was more inclined than ever to pursue it, as it appeared to me to strike directly at the

main root of all our infidelity. In the following pages it is, accordingly, pursued at large, and some arguments for immortality, new at least to me, are ventured on in them. There, also, the writer has made an attempt to set the gross absurdities and horrors of annihilation in a fuller and more affecting view, than is (I think) to be met with elsewhere.

The gentleman for whose sake this attempt was chiefly made, profess great admiration for the wisdom of Heathen antiquity: what pity it is they are not sincere! If they were sincere, how would it mortify them, to consider with what contempt and abhorrence their notions would have been received by those whom they so much admire. What degree of contempt and abhorrence would fall to their share may be conjectured by the following matter of fact, (in my opinion) extremely memorable. Of all their Heathen worthies, Socrates (it is well known) was the most guarded, dispassionate, and composed; yet this great master of temper was angry, and angry at his last hour; and angry with his friend; and angry for what deserved acknowledgment; angry for a right and tender instance of true friendship towards him. Is not this surprising? what could be the cause?—The cause was for his honour: It was a truly noble, though, perhaps, a too punctilious regard for Immortality: for his friend asking him, with such an affectionate concern as became a friend, 'Where he should deposit his remains?' it was resented by Socrates, as implying a dishonourable supposition that he could be so mean as to have regard for any thing, even in himself, that was not immortal.

This fact, well considered, would make our infidels withdraw their admiration from Socrates, or make them endeavour, by their imitation of his illustrious example, to share his glory; and consequently, it would incline them to peruse the following pages with candour and impartiality, which is all I desire, and that for their sakes; for I am persuaded that an unprejudiced infidel must, necessarily, receive some advantageous impressions from them.

July 7, 1744.

CONTENTS.

In the Sixth Night, arguments were drawn from Nature in proof of Immortality: here, others are drawn from Man; from his discontent; from his passions and powers; from the gradual growth of reason; from his fear of death; from the nature of hope, and of virtue; from knowledge and love, as being the most essential properties of the soul; from the order of creation; from the nature of ambition; avarice; pleasure.—A digression on the grandeur of the passions.—Immortality alone renders our present state intelligible.—An objection from the Stoic's disbelief of Immortality answered.—Endless questions unresolvable, but on supposition of our Immortality.—The natural, most melancholy, and pathetic complaint of a worthy man, under the persuasion of no futurity.—The gross absurdities and horrors of annihilation urged home on Lorenzo.—The soul's vast importance; from whence it arises, &c.—The difficulty of being an Infidel; the infamy; the cause; and the character of an infidel state.—What true free-thinking is; the necessary punishment of the false.—Man's ruin is from himself.—An infidel accuses himself of guilt and hypocrisy, and that of the worst sort; his obligation to Christians; what danger he incurs by virtue; vice recommended to him: his high pretences to virtue and benevolence exploded.—The conclusion, on the nature of faith; reason; and hope; with an apology for this attempt.

HEAVEN gives the needful, but neglected call.
What day, what hour, but knocks at human hearts,
To wake the soul to sense of future scenes?
Death stands, like Mercury, in every way,
And kindly points us to our journey's end.
Pope, who couldst make immortals! art thou dead?
I give thee joy; nor will I take my leave,
So soon to follow. Man but dives in death,
Dives from the sun, in fairer day to rise;
The grave, his subterranean road to bliss.
Yes, infinite indulgence planned it so;
Through various parts our glorious story runs
Time gives the preface, endless age unrols
The volume (ne'er unrolled) of human fate.
This, earth and skies* already have proclaimed
The world's a prophecy of worlds to come,
And who, what God foretells, (who speaks in things
Still louder than in words) shall dare deny?
If Nature's arguments appear too weak,
Turn a new leaf, and stronger read in man.
If man sleeps on, untaught by what he sees,
Can he prove infidel to what he feels!
He, whose blind thought futurity denies,
Unconscious bears, Bellerophon! like thee,
His own indictment; he condemns himself;
Who reads his bosom, reads immortal life;
Or Nature there, imposing on her sons,
Has written fables: man was made a lie.
Why discontent for ever harboured there?
Incurable consumption of our peace!
Resolve me why the cottager and king,
He whom sea-severed realms obey, and he
Who steals his whole dominion from the waste,
Repelling winter-blasts with mud and straw,
Disquieted alike, draw sigh for sigh,
In fate so distant, in complaint so near?
Is it that things terrestrial can't content?
Deep in rich pasture, will thy flocks complain?
Not so; but to their master is denied
To share their sweet serene. Man, ill at ease
In this, not his own place, this foreign field,
Where nature fodders him with other food
Than was ordained his cravings to suffice,
Poor in abundance, famished at a feast,
Sighs on for something more, when most enjoyed
Is Heaven then kinder to thy flocks than thee?
Not so; thy pasture richer, but remote;
In part remote; for that remoter part

* See Night the Sixth.

Man bleats from instinct, though, perhaps, debauched
By sense, his reason sleeps, nor dreams the cause.
The cause how obvious, when his reason wakes:
His grief is but his grandeur in disguise,
And discontent is immortality.
  Shall sons of Ether, shall the blood of Heaven,
Set up their hopes on earth, and stable here,
With brutal acquiescence, in the mire?
Lorenzo, no! they shall be nobly pained;
The glorious foreigners, distressed, shall sigh
On thrones, and thou congratulate the sigh.
Man's misery declares him born for bliss;
His anxious heart asserts the truth I sing,
And gives the sceptic in his head—the lie.
Our heads, our hearts, our passions, and our powers,
Speak the same language; call us to the skies:
Unripened these, in this inclement clime,
Scarce rise above conjecture and mistake;
And for this land of trifles those, too strong,
Tumultuous rise, and tempest human life.
What prize on earth can pay us for the storm?
Meet objects for our passions Heaven ordained,
Objects that challenge all their fire, and leave
No fault but in defect. Blessed Heaven! avert
A bounded ardour for unbounded bliss.
O for a bliss unbounded! far beneath
A soul immortal is a mortal joy.
Nor are our powers to perish immature;
But after feeble effort here, beneath
A brighter sun, and in a nobler soil,
Transplanted from this sublunary bed,
Shall flourish fair, and put forth all their bloom.
  Reason progressive, instinct is complete;
Swift instinct leaps; slow Reason feebly climbs.
Brutes soon their zenith reach; their little all
Flows in at once; in ages they no more
Could know, or do, or covet, or enjoy.
Were man to live coeval with the sun,
The patriarch-pupil would be learning still,
Yet, dying, leave his lesson half unlearned.
Men perish in advance, as if the sun
Should set ere noon, in eastern oceans drowned;
If fit with dim illustrious to compare,
The sun's meridian with the soul of man.
To man, why, stepdame Nature, so severe?
Why thrown aside thy masterpiece half-wrought,
While meaner efforts thy last hands enjoy?
Or if, abortively, poor man must die,
Nor reach what reach he might, why die in dread?
Why cursed with foresight? wise to misery?
Why of his proud prerogative the prey?
Why less pre-eminent in rank than pain?
His immortality alone can tell;
Full ample fund to balance all amiss,
And turn the scale in favour of the just!
  His immortality alone can solve
That darkest of enigmas, human hope;
Of all the darkest, if at death we die.
Hope, eager Hope, the assassin of our joy,
All present blessings treading under foot,
Is scarce a milder tyrant than Despair.
With no past toils content, still planning new,
Hope turns us o'er to Death alone for ease.
Possession, why more tasteless than pursuit?
Why is a wish far dearer than a crown?
That wish accomplished, why the grave of bliss?—
Because in the great future buried deep,
Beyond our plans of empire and renown,
Lies all that man with ardour should pursue;
And he who made him bent him to the right.
  Man's heart the Almighty to the future sets,
By secret and inviolable springs,
And makes his hope his sublunary joy.
Man's heart eats all things, and is hungry still;
'More, more!' the glutton cries: for something new
So rages appetite. If man can't mount,
He will descend. He starves on the possessed;
Hence, the world's master, from Ambition's spire,
In Caprea plunged, and dived beneath the brute.
In that rank sty why wallowed Empire's son
Supreme?—Because he could no higher fly:
His riot was Ambition in despair.
  Old Rome consulted birds; Lorenzo, thou
With more success the flight of Hope survey,
Of restless Hope, for ever on the wing.
High-perched o'er every thought that falcon sits,
To fly at all that rises in her sight:
And never stooping, but to mount again
Next moment, she betrays her aim's mistake,
And owns her quarry lodged beyond the grave.
  There should it fail us, (it must fail us there,
If being fails) more mournful riddles rise,
And virtue vies with hope in mystery.
Why virtue? where its praise, its being, fled?
Virtue is true self-interest pursued;
What true self-interest of quite mortal man?
To close with all that makes him happy here.
If vice (as sometimes) is our friend on earth,
Then vice is virtue; 'tis our sovereign good.
In self-applause is virtue's golden prize?
No self-applause attends it on thy scheme.
Whence self-applause? from conscience of the right;
And what is right, but means of happiness?
No means of happiness when virtue yields;
That basis failing, falls the building too,
And lays in ruin every virtuous joy.
  The rigid guardian of a blameless heart,
So long revered, so long reputed wise,
Is weak, with rank knight-errantries o'er-run.
Why beats thy bosom with illustrious dreams
Of self-exposure, laudable, and great?
Of gallant enterprise, and glorious death?
Die for thy county?—thou romantic fool!
Seize, seize the plank thyself, and let her sink

Thy country! what to thee?—the Godhead, what?
(I speak with awe!) though he should bid thee bleed,
If, with thy blood, thy final hope is spilt?
Nor can Omnipotence reward the blow.
Be deaf; preserve thy being; disobey.
Nor is it disobedience. Know, Lorenzo,
Whate'er the Almighty's subsequent command,
His first command is this:—'Man, love thyself.'
In this alone free agents are not free.
Existence is the basis, bliss the prize;
If virtue costs existence, 'tis a crime;
Bold violation of our law supreme;
Black suicide; though nations, which consult
Their gain at thy expense, resound applause.
Since virtue's recompense is doubtful here,
If man dies wholly; well may we demand
Why is man suffered to be good, in vain?
Why to be good in vain, is man enjoined?
Why to be good in vain, is man betrayed?
Betrayed by traitors lodged in his own breast,
By sweet complacencies from virtue felt?
Why whispers Nature lies on Virtue's part?
Or if blind Instinct (which assumes the name
Of sacred Conscience) plays the fool in man,
Why reason made accomplice in the cheat?
Why are the wisest loudest in her praise?
Can man by reason's beam be led astray!
Or, at his peril, imitate his God?
Since virtue sometimes ruins us on earth,
Or both are true, or man survives the grave.
Or man survives the grave; our own, Lorenzo,
Thy boast supreme a wild absurdity.
Dauntless thy spirit, cowards are thy scorn;
Grant man immortal, and thy scorn is just.
The man immortal, rationally brave,
Dares rush on death—because he can not die!
But if man loses all when life is lost,
He lives a coward, or a fool expires.
A daring infidel (and such there are,
From pride, example, lucre, rage, revenge,
Or pure heroical defect of thought)
Of all earth's madmen most deserves a chain.
When to the grave we follow the renowned
For valour, virtue, science, all we love,
And all we praise; for worth whose noon-tide beam,
Enabling us to think in higher style,
Mends our ideas of ethereal powers;
Dream we, that lustre of the moral world
Goes out in stench, and rottenness the close?
Why was he wise to know, and warm to praise,
And strenuous to transcribe, in human life,
The mind Almighty? Could it be that Fate,
Just when the lineaments began to shine,
And dawn the Deity, should snatch the draught,
With night eternal blot it out, and give
The skies alarm, lest angels too might die?
If human souls why not angelic, too,
Extinguished; and a solitary God,
O'er ghastly ruin frowning from his throne?
Shall we this moment gaze on God in man,
The next lose man for ever in the dust?
From dust we disengage, or man mistakes,
And there, where least his judgment fears a flaw.
Wisdom and worth how boldly he commends!
Wisdom and worth are sacred names, revered
Where not embraced; applauded, deified;
Why not compassioned too? if spirits die,
Both are calamities, inflicted both
To make us but more wretched. Wisdom's eye
Acute, for what? to spy more miseries;
And worth, so recompensed, new-points their stings.
Or man surmounts the grave, or gain is loss,
And worth exalted humbles us the more.
Thou wilt not patronize a scheme that makes
Weakness and vice the refuge of mankind.
'Has virtue, then, no joys?'—Yes, joys dear bought.
Talk ne'er so long, in this imperfect state
Virtue and vice are at eternal war.
Virtue's a combat; and who fights for nought,
Or for precarious, or for small reward?
Who virtue's self-reward so loud resound,
Would take degrees angelic here below,
And virtue, while they compliment, betray,
By feeble motives and unfaithful guards.
The crown, the unfading crown, her soul inspires!
'Tis that, and that alone, can countervail
The body's treacheries and the world's assaults.
On earth's poor pay our famished virtue dies;
Truth incontestible! in spite of all
A Bayle has preached, or a Voltaire believed.
In man the more we dive, the more we see
Heaven's signet stamping an immortal make.
Dive to the bottom of his soul, the base
Sustaining all, what find we? knowledge, love!
As light and heat, essential to the sun,
These to the soul; and why, if souls expire?
How little lovely here? how little known?
Small knowledge we dig up with endless toil,
And love unfeigned may purchase perfect hate.
Why starved, on earth, our angel-appetites,
While brutal are indulged their fulsome fill?
Were then capacities divine conferred,
As a mock diadem, in savage sport,
Rank insult of our pompous poverty,
Which reaps but pain from seeming claims so fair?
In future age lies no redress? and shuts
Eternity the door on our complaint?
If so, for what strange ends were mortals made!
The worst to wallow, and the best to weep:
The man who merits most, must most complain:
Can we conceive a disregard in Heaven
What the worst perpetrate, or best endure?
This can not be. To love and know, in man
Is boundless appetite and boundless power

And these demonstrate boundless objects too.
Objects, powers, appetites, Heaven suits in all,
Nor, nature through, e'er violates this sweet
Eternal concord on her tuneful string.
Is man the sole exception from her laws!
Eternity struck off from human hope,
(I speak with truth, but veneration too)
Man is a monster, the reproach of Heaven,
A stain, a dark, impenetrable cloud
On Nature's beauteous aspect, and deforms
(Amazing blot!) deforms her with her lord.
If such is man's allotment, what is Heaven?
Or own the soul immortal, or blaspheme.
Or own the soul immortal, or invert
All order. Go, mock-majesty! go, man!
And bow to thy superiors of the stall,
Through every scene of sense superior far
They graze the turf untilled, they drink the stream
Unbrewed, and ever full, and unembittered
With doubts, fears, fruitless hopes, regrets, despairs,
Mankind's peculiar! Reason's precious dower!
No foreign clime they ransack for their robes,
Nor brothers cite to the litigious bar;
Their good is good entire, unmixed, unmarred;
They find a paradise in every field,
On boughs forbidden where no curses hang:
Their ill no more than strikes the sense, unstretched
By previous dread, or murmur in the rear:
When the worst comes, it comes unfeared; one stroke
Begins and ends their wo: they die but once;
Blessed, incommunicable privilege! for which
Proud man, who rules the globe and reads the stars,
Philosopher or hero, sighs in vain.
Account for this prerogative in brutes.
No day, no glimpse of day, to solve the knot,
But what beams on it from Eternity.
O sole and sweet solution! that unties
The difficult, and softens the severe;
The cloud on Nature's beauteous face dispels;
Restores bright order; casts the brute beneath,
And reinthrones us in supremacy
Of joy, even here. Admit immortal life,
And virtue is knight-errantry no more;
Each virtue brings in hand a golden dower,
Far richer in reversion: hope exults,
And though much bitter in our cup is thrown,
Predominates, and gives the taste of Heaven.
O wherefore is the Deity so kind?
Astonishing beyond astonishment!
Heaven our reward—for heaven enjoyed below.
Still unsubdued thy stubborn heart?—for there
The traitor lurks, who doubts the truth I sing:
Reason is guiltless; Will alone rebels.—
What, in that stubborn heart, if I should find
New unexpected witnesses against thee?
Ambition, Pleasure, and the Love of gain!
Can'st thou suspect that these, which make the soul
The slave of earth, should own her heir of Heaven?
Can'st thou suspect what makes us disbelieve
Our immortality should prove it sure?
First, then, Ambition summon to the bar.
Ambition's shame, extravagance, disgust,
And inextinguishable nature, speak:
Each much deposes; hear them in their turn.
Thy soul how passionately fond of fame!
How anxious that fond passion to conceal!
We blush, detected in designs on praise,
Though for best deeds, and from the best of men;
And why? because immortal. Art divine
Has made the body tutor to the soul;
Heaven kindly gives our blood a moral flow,
Bids it ascend the glowing cheek, and there
Upbraid that little heart's inglorious aim
Which stoops to court a character from man;
While o'er us, in tremendous judgment, sit
Far more than man, with endless praise and blame.
Ambition's boundless appetite outspeaks
The verdict of its shame. When souls take fire
At high presumptions of their own desert,
One age is poor applause: the mighty shout,
The thunder by the living few begun,
Late time must echo, worlds unborn resound.
We wish our names eternally to live;
Wild dream! which never had haunted human thought,
Had not our natures been eternal too.
Instinct points out an interest in hereafter,
But our blind reason sees not where he lies,
Or, seeing, gives the substance for the shade.
Shame is the shade of Immortality,
And in itself a shadow; soon as caught
Contemned, it shrinks to nothing in the grasp.
Consult the ambitious, 'tis ambition's cure.
'And is this all?' cried Cæsar, at his height,
Disgusted. This third proof Ambition brings
Of immortality. The first in fame,
Observe him near, your envy will abate:
Shamed at the disproportion vast between
The passion and the purchase, he will sigh
At such success, and blush at his renown.
And why? because far richer prize invites
His heart; far more illustrious glory calls;
It calls in whispers, yet the deafest hear.
And can Ambition a fourth proof supply?
It can, and stronger than the former three,
Yet quite o'erlooked by some reputed wise.
Though disappointments in ambition pain,
And though success disgusts, yet still, Lorenzo!
In vain we strive to pluck it from our hearts,
By Nature planted for the noblest ends.
Absurd the famed advice to Pyrrhus given,
More praised than pondered: specious, but unsound:

Sooner that hero's sword the world had quelled,
Than reason his ambition. Man must soar;
An obstinate activity within,
An insuppressive spring, will toss him up
In spite of Fortune's load. Not kings alone,
Each villager has his ambition too:
No sultan prouder than his fettered slave.
Slaves build their little Babylons of straw,
Echo the proud Assyrian in their hearts,
And cry,—'Behold the wonders of my might!'
And why? because immortal as their lord;
And souls immortal must for ever heave
At something great; the glitter or the gold;
The praise of mortals, or the praise of Heaven!
Nor absolutely vain is human praise,
When human is supported by divine.
I'll introduce Lorenzo to himself;
Pleasure and Pride (bad masters!) share our hearts.
As love of pleasure is ordained to guard
And feed our bodies, and extend our race;
The love of praise is planted to protect
And propagate—the glories of the mind!
What is it, but the love of praise, inspires,
Matures, refines, embellishes, exalts,
Earth's happiness? from that the delicate,
The grand, the marvellous, of civil life,
Want and convenience, under-workers, lay
The basis on which love of glory builds.
Nor is thy life, O Virtue! less in debt
To praise thy secret-stimulating friend.
Were men not proud, what merit should we miss!
Pride made the virtues of the Pagan world.
Praise is the salt that seasons right to man,
And whets his appetite for moral good.
Thirst of applause is Virtue's second guard,
Reason her first; but reason wants an aid;
Our private reason is a flatterer;
Thirst of applause calls public judgment in
To poise our own, to keep an even scale,
And give endangered Virtue fairer play.
Here a fifth proof arises, stronger still.
Why this so nice construction of our hearts?
These delicate moralities of sense,
This constitutional reserve of aid
To succour Virtue when our reason fails,
If virtue, kept alive by care and toil,
And oft the mark of injuries on earth
When laboured to maturity (its bill
Of disciplines and pains unpaid) must die?
Why freighted rich to dash against a rock?
Were man to perish when most fit to live,
O how misspent were all these stratagems,
By skill divine inwoven in our frame?
Where are Heaven's holiness and mercy fled?
Laughs Heaven, at once, at virtue and at man?
If not, why that discouraged, this destroyed?—
Thus far Ambition: what says Avarice?
This her chief maxim, which has long been thine:
'The wise and wealthy are the same.'—I grant it.
To store up treasure, with incessant toil,
This is man's province, this his highest praise:
To this great end keen Instinct stings him on:
To guide that instinct, Reason! is thy charge,
'Tis thine to tell us where true treasure lies;
But Reason, failing to discharge her trust,
Or to the deaf discharging it in vain,
A blunder follows, and blind Industry,
Galled by the spur, but stranger to the course,
(The course where stakes of more than gold are won)
O'erloading with the cares of distant age
The jaded spirits of the present hour,
Provides for an eternity below.
'Thou shalt not covet,' is a wise command,
But bounded to the wealth the sun surveys.
Look farther, the command stands quite reversed,
And avarice is a virtue most divine.
Is faith a refuge for our happiness?
Most sure; and is it not for reason too?
Nothing this world unriddles but the next.
Whence inextinguishable thirst of gain?
From inextinguishable life in man:
Man, if not meant, by worth, to reach the skies,
Had wanted wing to fly so far in guilt.
Sour grapes, I grant, ambition, avarice;
Yet still their root is immortality:
These its wild growths, so bitter and so base,
(Pain and reproach!) religion can reclaim,
Refine, exalt, throw down their poisonous lee,
And make them sparkle in the bowl of bliss.
See, the third witness laughs at bliss remote,
And falsely promises an Eden here:
Truth she shall speak for once, though prone to lie,
A common cheat, and Pleasure is her name.
To Pleasure never was Lorenzo deaf;
Then hear her now, now first thy real friend.
Since Nature made us not more fond than proud
Of happiness, (whence hypocrites in joy!
Makers of mirth! artificers of smiles!)
Why should the joy most poignant sense affords
Burn us with blushes, and rebuke our pride?—
Those heaven-born blushes tell us man descends,
Even in the zenith of his earthly bliss:
Should Reason take her infidel repose,
This honest instinct speaks our lineage high;
This instinct calls on darkness to conceal
Our rapturous relation to the stalls.
Our glory covers us with noble shame,
And he that's unconfounded is unmanned.
The man that blushes is not quite a brute.
Thus far with thee, Lorenzo! will I close,—
Pleasure is good, and man for pleasure made;
But pleasure, full of glory as of joy;
Pleasure, which neither blushes nor expires.
The witnesses are heard, the cause is o'er;
Let Conscience file the sentence in her court:
Dearer than deeds that half a realm convey,
Thus, sealed by Truth, the' authentic record run
'Know all; know Infidels,—unapt to know!

'Tis immortality your nature solves;
'Tis immortality deciphers man,
And opens all the mysteries of his make:
Without it, half his instincts are a riddle;
Without it, all his virtues are a dream:
His very crimes attest his dignity;
His sateless thirst of pleasure, gold, and fame,
Declares him born for blessings infinite.
What less than infinite makes unabsurd
Passions, which all on earth but more inflames?
Fierce passions, so mismeasured to this scene,
Stretched out, like eagles' wings, beyond our nest,
Far, far beyond the worth of all below,
For earth too large, presage a nobler flight,
And evidence our title to the skies.'
Ye gentle theologues of calmer kind!
Whose constitution dictates to your pen,
Who, cold yourselves, think ardour comes from hell!
Think not our passions from corruption sprung,
Though to corruption now they lend their wings:
That is their mistress; not their mother. All
(And justly) Reason deem divine: I see,
I feel a grandeur in the passions too,
Which speaks their high descent and glorious end;
Which speaks them rays of an eternal fire:
In Paradise itself they burnt as strong
Ere Adam fell, though wiser in their aim.
Like the proud Eastern, struck by Providence,
What though our passions are run mad, and stoop,
With low terrestrial appetite, to graze
On trash, on toys, dethroned from on high?
Yet still, through their disgrace, no feeble ray
Of greatness shines, and tells us whence they fell:
But these (like that fallen monarch when reclaimed)
When Reason moderates the reign aright,
Shall re-ascend, remount their former sphere,
Where once they soared illustrious, ere seduced,
By wanton Eve's debauch, to stroll on earth,
And set the sublunary world on fire.
But grant their frenzy lasts; their frenzy fails
To disappoint one providential end
For which Heaven blew up ardour in our hearts.
Were Reason silent, boundless Passion speaks
A future scene of boundless objects too,
And brings glad tidings of eternal day.
Eternal day! 'tis that enlightens all,
And all, by that enlightened, proves it sure.
Consider man as an immortal being,
Intelligible all, and all is great;
A crystalline transparency prevails,
And strikes full lustre through the human sphere:
Consider man as mortal, all is dark
And wretched; Reason weeps at the survey.
The learned Lorenzo cries, 'And let her weep;
Weak modern Reason: ancient times were wise.
Authority, that venerable guide,
Stands on my part; the famed Athenian Porch
(And who for wisdom so renowned as they?)
Denied this immortality to man.'

I grant it; but affirm, they proved it too.
'A riddle this!'—Have patience; I'll explain.
What noble vanities, what moral flights,
Glittering through their romantic wisdom's page,
Make us, at once, despise them and admire?
Fable is flat to these high-seasoned Sires;
They leave the' extravagance of song below.
'Flesh shall not feel, or, feeling, shall enjoy
The dagger or the rack; to them alike
A bed of roses, or the burning bull.'
In men exploding all beyond the grave,
Strange doctrine this! as doctrine it was strange,
But not as prophecy; for such it proved,
And, to their own amazement, was fulfilled:
They feigned a firmness Christians need not feign.
The Christian truly triumphed in the flame;
The Stoic saw, in double wonder lost,
Wonder at them, and wonder at himself,
To find the bold adventures of his thought
Not bold, and that he strove to lie in vain.
Whence, then, those thoughts—those towering thoughts, that flew
Such monstrous heights!—from instinct and from pride.
The glorious instinct of a deathless soul,
Confusedly conscious of her dignity,
Suggested truths they could not understand.
In Lust's dominion, and in Passion's storm,
Truth's system broken, scatter'd fragments lay,
As light in chaos, glimmering through the gloom:
Smit with the pomp of lofty sentiments,
Pleas'd Pride proclaimed what Reason disbelieved.
Pride, like the Delphic priestess, with a swell
Raved nonsense, destined to be future sense,
When life immortal, in full day, should shine,
And Death's dark shadows fly the Gospel-sun.
They spoke what nothing but immortal souls
Could speak; and thus the truth they questioned proved.
'Can, then, absurdities, as well as crimes,
Speak man immortal?' All things speak him so.
Much has been urged; and dost thou call for more?
Call, and with endless questions be distressed,
All unresolvable, if earth is all.
'Why life a moment? infinite desire?
Our wish eternity, our home the grave?
Heaven's promise dormant lies in human hope
Who wishes life immortal, proves it too.
Why happiness pursued, though never found?
Man's thirst of happiness declares it is
(For Nature never gravitates to nought)
That thirst unquenched, declares it is not here.
My Lucia, thy Clarissa call to thought;
Why cordial friendship riveted so deep,
As hearts to pierce at first, at parting rend,
If friend and friendship vanish in an hour?
Is not this torment in the mask of joy?
Why by reflection marred the joys of sense?
Why past and future preying on our hearts,

And putting all our present joys to death?
Why labours reason? instinct were as well;
Instinct far better: what can choose can err.
O how infallible the thoughtless brute!
'Twere well his Holiness were half as sure,
Reason with inclination why at war?
Why sense of guilt? why conscience up in arms?
Conscience of guilt is prophecy of pain,
And bosom-counsel to decline the blow.
Reason with inclination ne'er had jarr'd,
If nothing future paid forbearance here.
Thus on—these, and a thousand pleas uncall'd,
All promise, some insure, a second scene;
Which, were it doubtful, would be dearer far
Than all things else most certain: were it false,
What truth on earth so precious as the lie?
This world it gives us, let what will ensue;
This world it gives in that high cordial, hope;
The future of the present is the soul.
How this life groans when severed from the next?
Poor mutilated wretch that disbelieves!
By dark distrust his being cut in two,
In both parts perishes; life void of joy,
Sad prelude of eternity in pain!
Couldst thou persuade me the next life could fail
Our ardent wishes, how should I pour out
My bleeding heart in anguish, new as deep!
Oh! with what thoughts thy hope, and my despair,
Abhor'd Annihilation! blasts the soul,
And wide extends the bounds of human wo!
Could I believe Lorenzo's system true,
In this black channel would my ravings run:—
'Grief from the future borrow'd peace, ere-while.
The future vanished! and the present pained!
Strange import of unprecedented ill!
Fall how profound! like Lucifer's the fall!
Unequal fate! his fall, without his guilt!
From where fond Hope built her pavilion high,
The gods among, hurled headlong, hurled at once
To night! to nothing! darker still than night.
If 'twas a dream, why wake me, my worst foe,
Lorenzo! boastful of the name of friend!
O for delusion! O for error still!
Could vengeance strike much stronger than to plant
A thinking being in a world like this,
Not over-rich before, now beggar'd quite,
More curs'd than at the fall!—The sun goes out!
The thorns shoot up! what thorns in every tho't!
Why sense of better? it imbitters worse.
Why sense? why life? if but to sigh, then sink
To what I was! twice nothing! and much wo!
Wo from Heaven's bounties! wo from what was wont
To flatter most, high intellectual powers.
Thought, virtue, knowledge! blessings, by thy scheme,
All poisoned into pains. First, knowledge, once
My soul's ambition, now her greatest dread.
To know myself true wisdom?—No; to shun
That shocking science, parent of Despair;
Avert thy mirror; if I see, I die.
'Know my Creator? climb his blessed abode
By painful speculation, pierce the veil,
Dive in his nature, read his attributes,
And gaze in admiration—on a foe,
Obtruding life, withholding happiness!
From the full rivers that surround his throne,
Not letting fall one drop of joy on man;
Man gasping for one drop, that he might cease
To curse his birth, nor envy reptiles more;
Ye sable clouds, ye darkest shades of night!
Hide him, forever hide him from my thought,
Once all my comfort, source and soul of joy!
Now leagued with furies, and with thee,* against me.
'Know his achievements? study his renown?
Contemplate this Amazing Universe,
Dropt from his hand with miracles replete!
For what? mid miracles of nobler name
To find one miracle of misery?
To find the being, which alone can know
And praise his works, a blemish on his praise!
Through Nature's ample range, in thought, to stroll,
And start at man, the single mourner there,
Breathing high hope! chain'd down to pangs and death?
'Knowing is suffering: and shall Virtue share
The sigh of Knowledge?—Virtue shares the sigh.
By straining up the steep of excellent,
By battles fought, and from temptation won,
What gains she but the pang of seeing worth,
Angelic worth, soon shuffled in the dark
With every vice, and swept to brutal dust?
Merit is madness, virtue is a crime,
A crime to reason, if it costs us pain
Unpaid: what pain, amidst a thousand more,
To think the most abandoned, after days
Of triumph o'er their betters, find in death
As soft a pillow, nor make fouler clay!
'Duty! religion!—these, our duty done,
Imply reward, Religion is mistake.
Duty!—there 's none, but to repel the cheat.
Ye Cheats! away: ye daughters of my pride,
Who feign yourselves the favourites of the skies,
Ye towering Hopes! abortive energies!
That toss and struggle in my lying breast,
To scale the skies, and build presumption there,
As I were heir of an eternity.
Vain, vain ambitions! trouble me no more.
Why travel far in quest of sure defeat?
As bounded as my being be my wish.
All is inverted. wisdom is a fool.
Sense! take the rein! blind Passion! drive us on,

* Lorenzo.

And, Ignorance! befriend us on our way;
Ye new, but truest patrons of our peace!
Yes, give the pulse full empire; live the brute,
Since as the brute we die: the sum of man,
Of Godlike man! to revel and to rot.
'But not on equal terms with other brutes;
Their revels a more poignant relish yield,
And safer too; they never poisons choose.
Instinct than reason makes more wholesome meals,
And sends all-marring Murmur far away,
For sensual life they best philosophise,
Theirs that serene the sages sought in vain:
'Tis man alone expostulates with Heaven:
His all the power and all the cause to mourn.
Shall human eyes alone dissolve in tears?
And bleed in anguish none but human hearts?
The wide stretched realm of intellectual wo,
Surpassing sensual far, is all our own.
In life so fatally distinguished, why
Cast in one lot, confounded, lumped in death?
'Ere yet in being, was mankind in guilt?
Why thundered this peculiar clause against us,
'All-mortal, and all-wretched!'—Have the skies
Reasons of state their subjects may not scan,
Nor humbly reason when they sorely sigh?—
'All-mortal, and all-wretched!'—'Tis too much,
Unparalleled in Nature: 'tis too much,
On being unrequested at thy hands,
Omnipotent! for I see nought but power.
'And why see that? why, thought! To toil and eat,
Then make our bed in darkness, needs no thought.
What superfluities are reasoning souls!
Oh! give eternity, or thought destroy.
But without thought our curse were half unfelt;
Its blunted edge would spare the throbbing heart,
And therefore 'tis bestowed. I thank thee, Reason!
For aiding life's too small calamities,
And giving being to the dread of death.
Such are thy bounties!—Was it then too much
For me to trespass on the brutal rights?
Too much for Heaven to make one emmet more?
Too much for Chaos to permit my mass
A longer stay with essences unwrought,
Unfashioned, untormented into man?
Wretched preferment to this round of pains!
Wretched captivity of frenzy, thought!
Wretched captivity of dying, life!
Life, thought, worth, wisdom, all (O foul revolt!)
Once friends to peace, gone over to the foe.
'Death, then, has changed its nature too. O Death!
Come to my bosom, thou best gift of Heaven!
Best friend of man! since man is man no more.
Why in this thorny wilderness so long,
Since there 's no promised land's ambrosial bower
To pay me with its honey for my stings?
It needful to the selfish schemes of Heaven
To sting us sore. why mocked our misery?
Why this so sumptuous insult o'er our heads?
Why this illustrious canopy displayed?
Why so magnificently lodged, Despair?
At stated periods, sure-returning, roll
These glorious orbs, that mortals may compute
Their length of labours and of pains, nor lose
Their misery's full measure?—Smiles with flowers
And fruits, promiscuous, ever-teeming earth,
That man may languish in luxurious scenes,
And in an Eden mourn his withered joys?
Claim earth and skies man's admiration, due
For such delights? blessed animals! too wise
To wonder, and too happy to complain!
'Our doom decreed demands a mournful scene.
Why not a dungeon dark for the condemned?
Why not the dragon's subterranean den
For man to howl in? why not his abode
Of the same dismal colour with his fate?
A Thebes, a Babylon, at vast expense
Of time, toil, treasure, art, for owls and adders
As congruous, as for man this lofty dome,
Which prompts proud thought, and kindles high desire;
If from her humble chamber in the dust,
While proud thought swells, and high desire inflames,
The poor worm calls us for her inmates there,
And round us Death's inexorable hand
Draws the dark curtain close, undrawn no more.
'Undrawn no more!—Behind the cloud of death,
Once, I beheld a sun, a sun which gilt
That sable cloud, and turned it all to gold.
How the grave's altered! fathomless as hell!
A real hell to those who dreamt of Heaven.
Annihilation! how it yawns before me!
Next moment I may drop from thought, from sense,
The privilege of angels and of worms,
An outcast from existence! and this spirit,
This all-pervading, this all-conscious soul,
This particle of energy divine,
Which travels Nature, flies from star to star,
And visits gods, and emulates their powers,
For ever is extinguished. Horror! death!
Death of that death I fearless, once, surveyed!—
When horror universal shall descend,
And heaven's dark concave urn all human race,
On that enormous, unrefunding tomb,
How just this verse; this monumental sigh!'—
"Beneath the lumber of demolished worlds,
Deep in the rubbish of the general wreck,
Swept ignominious to the common mass
Of matter, never dignified with life,
Here lie proud rationals; the sons of Heaven!
The lords of earth! the property of worms!
Beings of yesterday, and no to-morrow!
Who lived in terror, and in pangs expired'
All gone to rot in chaos, or to make
Their happy transit into blocks or brutes.
Nor longer sully their Creator's name."

Lorenzo! hear, pause, ponder, and pronounce.
Just is this history? if such is man,
Mankind's historian, though divine, might weep:
And dares Lorenzo smile—I know thee proud!
For once let pride befriend thee: Pride looks pale
At such a scene, and sighs for something more.
Amid thy boasts, presumptions, and displays,
And art thou then a shadow? less than shade?
A nothing? less than nothing? To have been,
And not to be, is lower than unborn.
Art thou ambitious? why then make the worm
Thine equal?—Runs thy taste of pleasure high?
Why patronise sure death of every joy?—
Charm riches? why choose beggary in the grave,
Of every hope a bankrupt! and for ever?—
Ambition, Pleasure, Avarice, persuade thee
To make that world of glory, rapture, wealth,
They lately proved,* thy soul's supreme desire!
What art thou made of? rather, how unmade?
Great Nature's master-appetite destroyed,
Is endless life and happiness despised:
Or both wished here, where neither can be found.
Such man's perverse, eternal war with Heaven!
Dar'st thou persist? and is there nought on earth
But a long train of transitory forms,
Rising and breaking millions in an hour?
Bubbles of a fantastic deity, blown up
In sport, and then in cruelty destroyed?
Oh! for what crime, unmerciful Lorenzo!
Destroys thy scheme the whole of human race?
Kind is fell Lucifer compared to thee.
Oh! spare this waste of being half-divine,
And vindicate the economy of Heaven.
Heaven is all love, all joy in giving joy;
It never had created but to bless;
And shall it then strike off the list of life
A being blessed, or worthy so to be?
Heaven starts at an annihilating God.
Is that, all Nature starts at, thy desire?
Art such a clod to wish thyself all clay?
What is that dreadful wish?—the dying groan
Of Nature, murdered by the blackest guilt.
What deadly poison has thy nature drank?
To nature, undebauched, no shock so great,
Nature's first wish is endless happiness;
Annihilation is an after-thought,
A monstrous wish, unborn till Virtue dies,
And, oh! what depth of horror lies inclosed!
For non-existence no man ever wished,
But first he wished the Deity destroyed.
If so; what words are dark enough to draw
Thy picture true? the darkest are too fair.
Beneath what baleful planet, in what hour
Of desperation, by what fury's aid,
In what infernal posture of the soul,
All hell invited, and all hell in joy
At such a birth, so near of kin,
Did thy foul fancy whelp so black a scheme
Of hopes abortive, faculties half-blown,
And deities begun, reduced to dust.
'There's nought (thou say'st) but one eternal flux
Of feeble essences, tumultuous driven
Through time's rough billows into night's abyss.'
Say, in this rapid tide of human ruin,
Is there no rock on which man's tossing thought
Can rest from terror, dare his fate survey,
And boldly think it something to be born?
Amid such hourly wrecks of being fair,
Is there no central, all-sustaining base,
All-realizing, all-connecting power,
Which, as it called forth all things, can recall,
And force Destruction to refund her spoil?
Command the grave restore her taken prey
Bid death's dark vale its human harvest yield?
And earth and ocean pay their debt of man,
True to the grand deposit trusted there?
Is there no potentate, whose outstretched arm,
When ripening time calls forth the appointed hour,
Plucked from foul Devastation's famished maw,
Binds present, past, and future, to his throne?
His throne how glorious! thus divinely graced
By germinating beings clustering round!
A garland worthy the Divinity!
A throne, by Heaven's Omnipotence in smiles,
Built (like a Pharos towering in the waves)
Amidst immense effusions of his love!
An ocean of communicated bliss!
An all-prolific, all-preserving God!
This were a God indeed.—And such is man,
As here presumed; he rises from his fall.
Think'st thou Omnipotence a naked root,
Each blossom fair of Deity destroyed?
Nothing is dead; nay, nothing sleeps; each soul,
That ever animated human clay,
Now wakes, is on the wing: and where, O where,
Will the swarm settle?—When the trumpet's call,
As sounding brass, collects us, round Heaven's throne
Conglobed, we bask in everlasting day,
(Paternal splendour!) and adhere for ever.
Had not the soul this outlet to the skies,
In this vast vessel of the universe
How should we gasp, as in an empty void!
How in the pangs of famished hope expire!
How bright my prospect shines! how gloomy thine!
A trembling world! and a devouring God!
Earth but the shambles of Omnipotence!
Heaven's face all stained with causeless massacres
Of countless millions, born to feel the pang
Of being lost. Lorenzo! can it be?
This bids us shudder at the thoughts of life!
Who would be born to such a phantom world,
Where nought substantial, but our misery?

* In the Sixth Night.

Where joy (if joy) but heightens our distress,
So soon to perish, and revive no more?
The greater such a joy, the more it pains.
A world so far from great, (and yet how great
It shines to thee!) there's nothing real in it;
Being, a shadow; consciousness, a dream:
A dream how dreadful! universal blank
Before it and behind; poor man, a spark
From non-existence struck by wrath divine,
Glittering a moment, nor that moment sure,
Midst upper, nether, and surrounding night,
His sad, sure, sudden, and eternal tomb!
Lorenzo! dost thou feel these arguments?
Or is there nought but vengeance can be felt?
How hast thou dared the Deity dethrone?
How dared indict him of a world like this?
If such the world, Creation was a crime;
For what is crime, but cause of misery?
Retract, blasphemer! and unriddle this,
Of endless argument above, below,
Without us, and within, the short result—
'If man's immortal, there's a God in Heaven!'
But wherefore such redundancy? such waste
Of argument? one sets my soul at rest;
One obvious, and at hand, and oh!—at heart.
So just the skies, Philander's life so pained,
His heart so pure, that or succeeding scenes
Have palms to give, or ne'er had he been born!
'What an old tale is this! Lorenzo cries.—
I grant this argument is old; but truth
No years impair; and had not this been true,
Thou never had'st despised it for its age.
Truth is immortal as thy soul, and fable
As fleeting as thy joys. Be wise, nor make
Heaven's highest blessing vengeance. O be wise!
Nor make a curse of immortality!
Say, know'st thou what it is, or what thou art?
Know'st thou the importance of a soul immortal?
Behold this mid-night glory: worlds on worlds!
Amazing pomp; redoubled this amaze!
Ten thousand add; add twice ten thousand more;
Then weigh the whole; one soul outweighs them all,
And calls the astonishing magnificence
Of unintelligent creation poor.
For this, believe not me: no man believe;
Trust not in words, but deeds; and deeds no less
Than those of the Supreme, nor his a few:
Consult them all; consulted, all proclaim
Thy soul's importance. Tremble at thyself,
For whom Omnipotence has waked so long;
Has waked, and worked for ages; from the birth
Of Nature to this unbelieving hour.
In this small province of his vast domain
(All Nature bow while I pronounce his name!)
What has God done, and not for this sole end,
To rescue souls from death? The soul's high price
Is writ in all the conduct of the skies.
The soul's high price is the Creation's key,
Unlocks its mysteries, and naked lays
The genuine cause of every deed divine:
That is the chain of ages which maintains
Their obvious correspondence, and unites
Most distant periods in one blessed design:
That is the mighty hinge on which have turned
All revolutions, whether we regard
The natural, civil, or religious world;
The former two, but servants to the third:
To that their duty done, they both expire,
Their mass new-cast, forgot their deeds renowned,
And angels ask, 'Where once they shone so fair?'
To lift us from this abject, to sublime;
This flux, to permanent; this dark, to day;
This foul, to pure; this turbid, to serene;
This mean, to mighty!—for this glorious end
The Almighty, rising, his long sabbath broke!
The world was made, was ruined, was restored:
Laws from the skies were published, were repealed;
On earth kings, kingdoms, rose; kings, kingdoms, fell;
Famed sages lighted up the Pagan world;
Prophets from Sion darted a keen glance
Through distant age; saints travelled, martyrs bled;
By wonders sacred Nature stood controlled;
The living were translated; dead were raised;
Angels, and more than angels, came from Heaven
And, oh! for this descended lower still:
Guilt was hell's gloom; astonished at his guest,
For one short moment Lucifer adored.
Lorenzo! and wilt thou do less?—For this
That hallowed page, fools scoff at, was inspired,
Of all these truths thrice-venerable code!
Deists; perform your quarantine; and then
Fall prostrate, ere you touch it, lest you die.
Nor less intensely bent infernal powers
To mar, than those of light, this end to gain.
O what a scene is here!—Lorenzo! wake!
Rise to the thought; exert, expand thy soul
To take the vast idea; it denies
All else the name of great. Two warring worlds,
Not Europe against Afric! warring worlds,
Of more than mortal! mounted on the wing!
On ardent wings of energy and zeal,
High-hovering o'er this little brand of strife,
This sublunary ball.—But strife, for what?
In their own cause conflicting! no: in thine,
In man's. His single interest blows the flame;
His the sole stake; his fate the trumpet sounds
Which kindles war immortal. How it burns!
Tumultuous swarms of deities in arms;
Force force opposing, till the waves run high,
And tempest Nature's universal sphere.
Such opposites eternal, stedfast, stern,
Such foes implacable are good and ill;
Yet man, vain man, would mediate peace between them.

Think not this fiction: 'There was war in Heaven.'
From Heaven's high crystal mountain where it hung,
The Almighty's outstretched arm took down his bow,
And shot his indignation at the deep:
Re-thundered Hell, and darted all her fires.—
And seems the stake of little moment still?
And slumbers man, who singly caused the storm?
He sleeps.—And art thou shocked at mysteries?
The greatest, thou. How dreadful to reflect
What ardour, care, and counsel, mortals cause
In breasts divine! how little in their own!
Where'er I turn, how new proofs pour upon me!
How happily this wondrous view supports
My former argument! how strongly strikes
Immortal life's full demonstration here!
Why this exertion? why this strange regard
From Heaven's Omnipotent indulged to man?—
Because in man the glorious, dreadful power,
Extremely to be pained, or blessed for ever.
Duration gives importance, swells the price.
An angel, if a creature of a day,
What would he be? a trifle of no weight;
Or stand or fall, no matter which, he's gone.
Because immortal, therefore is indulged
This strange regard of deities to dust.
Hence Heaven looks down on earth with all her eyes;
Hence, the soul's mighty moment in her sight;
Hence, every soul has partizans above,
And every thought a critic in the skies:
Hence, clay, vile clay! has angels for its guard,
And every guard a passion for his charge:
Hence, from all age, the cabinet divine
Has held high counsel o'er the fate man.
Nor have the clouds those gracious counsels hid;
Angels undrew the curtain of the throne,
And Providence came forth to meet mankind:
In various modes of emphasis and awe
He spoke his will, and trembling Nature heard;
He spoke it loud, in thunder, and in storm:
Witness thou, Sinai! whose cloud-covered height,
And shaken basis, owned the present God:
Witness, ye Billows; whose returning tide,
Breaking the chain that fastened it in air,
Swept Egypt and her menaces to hell:
Witness, ye flames, the Assyrian tyrant blew
To sevenfold rage, as impotent as strong:
And thou, Earth, witness, whose expanding jaws
Closed o'er Presumption's sacrilegious sons;*
Has not each element, in turn, subscribed
The soul's high price, and sworn it to the wise?
Has not flame, ocean, ether, earthquake, strove
To strike the truth through adamantine man?
If not all adamant, Lorenzo, hear;

* Korah, &c.

All is delusion; Nature is wrapt up
In tenfold night, from Reason's keenest eye:
There's no consistence, meaning, plan, or end,
In all beneath the sun, in all above,
(As far as man can penetrate) or Heaven
Is an immense, inestimable prize;
Or all is nothing, or that prize is all.—
And shall each toy be still a match for Heaven,
And full equivalent for groans below?
Who would not give a trifle to prevent,
What he would give a thousand worlds to cure?
Lorenzo, thou hast seen (if thine to see)
All Nature and her God, (by Nature's course,
And Nature's course controlled) declare for me.
The skies above proclaim 'immortal man!'
And 'man immortal!' all below resounds.
The world's a system of theology,
Read by the greatest strangers to the schools;
If honest, learned; and sages o'er a plough.
Is not, Lorenzo, then, imposed on thee
This hard alternative, or to renounce
Thy reason and thy sense, or to believe?
What then is unbelief? 'tis an exploit,
A strenuous enterprise; to gain it, man
Must burst through every bar of common sense,
Of common shame, magnanimously wrong;
And what rewards the study combatant?—
His prize, repentance; infamy, his crown.
But wherefore infamy?—for want of faith
Down the steep precipice of wrong he slides;
There's nothing to support him in the right.
Faith in the future wanting is, at least
In embryo, every weakness, every guilt,
And strong temptation ripens it to birth.
If this life's gain invites him to the deed,
Why not his country sold, his father slain?
'Tis virtue to pursue our good supreme,
And his supreme, his only good, is here!
Ambition, avarice, by the wise disdained,
Is perfect wisdom while mankind are fools,
And think a turf or tombstone covers all:
These find employment, and provide for sense
A richer pasture and a larger range;
And sense, by right divine, ascends the throne.
When virtue's prize and prospect are no more,
Virtue no more we think the will of Heaven.
Would Heaven quite beggar Virtue, if beloved?
"Has Virtue charms?"—I grant her heavenly fair;
But if unportioned, all will Interest wed,
Though that our admiration, this our choice.
The virtues grow on immortality;
That root destroyed, they wither and expire.
A Deity believed, will nought avail;
Rewards and punishments make God adored,
And hopes and fears give Conscience all her power.
As in the dying parent dies the child,
Virtue with Immortality expires.

Who tells me he denies his soul immortal,
Whate'er his boast, has told me he's a knave.
His duty 'tis to love himself alone,
Nor care though mankind perish if he smiles.
Who thinks ere long the man shall wholly die,
Is dead already; nought but brute survives.
And are there such?—Such candidates there are
For more than death; for utter loss of being;
Being, the basis of the Deity!
Ask you the cause?—the cause they will not tell;
Nor need they. Oh, the sorceries of sense!
They work this transformation on the soul,
Dismount her like the serpent at the fall,
Dismount her from her native wing (which soared
Erewhile ethereal heights) and throw her down
To lick the dust, and crawl in such a thought.
Is it in words to paint you? O ye fallen!
Fallen from the wings of reason and of hope!
Erect in stature, prone in appetite!
Patrons of pleasure, posting into pain!
Lovers of argument, averse to sense!
Boasters of liberty! fast bound in chains!
Lords of the wide creation, and the shame!
More senseless than the irrationals you scorn!
More base than those you rule! than those you pity
Far more undone! O ye most infamous
Of beings, from superior dignity!
Deepest in wo, from means of boundless bliss!
Ye cursed by blessings infinite! because
Most highly favoured, most profoundly lost.
Ye motley mass of contradiction strong!
And are you, too, convinced your souls fly off
In exhalation soft, and die in air,
From the full flood of evidence against you?
In the coarse drudgeries and sinks of sense,
Your souls have quite worn out the make of Heaven.
By vice new-cast, and creatures of your own;
But though you can deform, you can't destroy:
To curse, not uncreate, is all your power.
Lorenzo! this black brotherhood renounce;
Renounce St. Evremond, and read St. Paul.
Ere rapt by miracle, by reason winged,
His mounting mind made long abode in Heaven.
This is free-thinking, unconfined to parts,
To end the soul, on curious travel bent,
Through all the provinces of human thought;
To dart her flight through the whole sphere of man;
Of this vast universe to make the tour;
In each recess of space and time at home,
Familiar with their wonders; diving deep;
And, like a prince of boundless interests there,
Still most ambitious of the most remote;
To look on truth unbroken and entire;
Truth in the system, the full orb; where truths
By truths enlightened and sustained, afford
An arch-like, strong foundation, to support
The incumbent weight of absolute, complete
Conviction: here, the more we press, we stand
More firm: who most examine, most believe.
Parts, like half sentences, confound; the whole
Conveys the sense, and God is understood;
Who not in fragments writes to human race:
Read his whole volume, sceptic! then reply.
This, this is thinking free, a thought that grasps
Beyond a grain, and looks beyond an hour.
Turn up thine eye, survey this midnight scene;
What are earth's kingdoms to yon boundless orbs,
Of human souls, one day, the destined range?
And what yon boundless orbs to godlike man?
Those numerous worlds that throng the firmament,
And ask more space in Heaven, can roll at large
In man's capacious thought, and still leave room
For ampler orbs, for new creations there.
Can such a soul contract itself, to gripe
A point of no dimension, of no weight?
It can; it does: the world is such a point;
And of that point how small a part enslaves!
How small a part—of nothing, shall I say?
Why not?—Friends, our chief treasure, how they drop!
Lucia, Narcissa fair, Philander gone!
The grave, like fabled Cerberus, has oped
A triple mouth, and in an awful voice
Loud calls my soul, and utters all I sing.
How the world falls to pieces round about us,
And leaves us in a ruin of our joy!
What says this transportation of my friends?
It bids me love the place where now they dwell,
And scorn this wretched spot they leave so poor.
Eternity's vast ocean lies before thee;
There, there, Lorenzo! thy Clarissa sails.
Give thy mind sea-room; keep it wide of earth,
That rock of souls immortal; cut thy cord;
Weigh anchor; spread thy sails; call every wind,
Eye thy great Pole-star; make the land of Life!
Two kinds of life has double-natured man,
And two of death; the last far more severe.
Life animal is nurtured by the sun,
Thrives on his bounties, triumphs in his beams:
Life rational subsists on higher food,
Triumphant in His beams who made the day:
When we leave that sun, and are left by this,
(The fate of all who die in stubborn guilt)
'Tis utter darkness, strictly double death.
We sink by no judicial stroke of Heaven,
But Nature's course, as sure as plummets fall.
Since God or man must alter ere they meet,
(Since light and darkness blend not in one sphere)
'Tis manifest, Lorenzo, who must change.
If, then, that double death should prove thy lot,
Blame not the bowels of the Deity;
Man shall be blessed, as far as man permits.

Not man alone, all rationals Heaven arms
With an illustrious, but tremendous power,
To counteract its own most gracious ends,
And this of strict necessity, not choice;
That power denied, men, angels, were no more
But passive engines, void of praise or blame.
A nature rational implies the power
Of being blessed or wretched, as we please;
Else idle Reason would have nought to do,
And he that would be barred capacity
Of pain, courts incapacity of bliss.
Heaven wills our happiness, allows our doom;
Invites us ardently, but not compels:
Heaven but persuades, almighty man decrees.
Man is the maker of immortal fates.
Man falls by man, if finally he falls;
And fall he must, who learns from death alone
The dreadful secret,—that he lives for ever.
Why this to thee?—thee yet, perhaps in doubt
Of second life? but wherefore doubtful still?
Eternal life is Nature's ardent wish:
What ardently we wish we soon believe:
Thy tardy faith declares that wish destroyed:
What has destroyed it?—shall I tell thee what?
When feared the future, 'tis no longer wished;
And when unwished, we strive to disbelieve.
'Thus infidelity our guilt betrays.'
Nor that the sole detection! Blush, Lorenzo!
Blush for hypocrisy, if not for guilt.
The future feared?—An infidel, and fear?
Fear what? a dream? a fable?—How thy dread,
Unwilling evidence, and therefore strong,
Affords my cause an undesigned support?
How Disbelief affirms what it denies!
'It, unawares, asserts immortal life.'—
Surprising! Infidelity turns out
A creed and a confession of our sins:
Apostates, thus, are orthodox divines.
Lorenzo! with Lorenzo clash no more,
Nor longer a transparent vizor wear.
Think'st thou Religion only has her mask?
Our infidels are Satan's hypocrites,
Pretend the worst, and, at the bottom, fail.
When visited by thought, (thought will intrude)
Like him they serve, they tremble and believe.
Is there hypocrisy so foul as this?
So fatal to the welfare of the world?
What detestation, what contempt, their due!
And, if unpaid, be thanked for their escape,
That Christian candour they strive hard to scorn.
If not for that asylum, they might find
A hell on earth, nor 'scape a worse below.
With insolence and impotence of thought,
Instead of racking fancy to refute,
Reform thy manners, and the truth enjoy.—
But shall I dare confess the dire result?
Can thy proud reason brook so black a brand?
From purer manners to sublimer faith,
Is Nature's unavoidable ascent.
An honest Deist, where the gospel shines,
Matured to nobler, in the Christian ends.
When that blessed change arrives, e'en cast aside
This song superfluous: life immortal strikes
Conviction in a flood of light divine.
A Christian dwells, like Uriel,* in the sun;
Meridian evidence puts doubt to flight,
And ardent hope anticipates the skies.
Of that bright sun, Lorenzo! scale the sphere:
'Tis easy; it invites thee; it descends
From Heaven, to woo and waft thee whence it came
Read and revere the sacred page, a page
Where triumphs immortality; a page
Which not the whole Creation could produce;
Which not the Conflagration shall destroy:
'Tis printed in the mind of gods for ever,
In Nature's ruins not one letter lost.
In proud disdain of what e'en gods adore,
Dost smile?—Poor wretch! thy guardian angel weeps.
Angels and men assent to what I sing;
Wits smile, and thank me for my midnight dream
How vicious hearts fume frenzy to the brain!
Parts push us on to pride, and pride to shame.
Pert Infidelity is Wit's cockade,
To grace the brazen brow that braves the skies,
By loss of being dreadfully secure.
Lorenzo! if thy doctrine wins the day,
And drives my dreams, defeated, from the field;
If this is all, if earth a final scene,
Take heed; stand fast; be sure to be a knave
A knave in grain! ne'er deviate to the right.
Shouldst thou be good—how infinite thy loss!
Guilt only makes annihilation gain.
Blessed scheme! which life deprives of comfort, death
Of hope, and which vice only recommends.
If so, where, Infidels! your bait thrown out
To catch weak converts? where your lofty boast
Of zeal for virtue, and of love to man?
Annihilation! I confess in these.
What can reclaim you? dare I hope profound
Philosophers the converts of a song?
Yet know its title† flatters you, not me;
Your's be the praise to make my title good;
Mine to bless Heaven, and triumph in your praise
But since so pestilential your disease,
Though sovereign is the medicine I prescribe,
As yet I'll neither triumph nor despair,
But hope, ere long, my midnight dream will wake
Your hearts, and teach your wisdom—to be wise:
For why should souls immortal, made for bliss,
E'er wish (and wish in vain!) that souls could die?
What ne'er can die, oh! grant to live, and crown
The wish, and aim, and labour of the skies;
Increase, and enter on the joys of Heaven:

* Milton's Paradise Lost.
† The Infidel Reclaimed

Thus shall my title pass a sacred seal,
Receive an imprimatur from above,
While angels shout—an Infidel Reclaimed!
To close Lorenzo! spite of all my pains,
Still seems it strange that thou shouldst live for ever?
Is it less strange that thou shouldst live at all?
This is a miracle, and that no more.
Who gave beginning can exclude an end.
Deny thou art; then doubt if thou shalt be.
A miracle with miracles inclosed
Is man! and starts his faith at what is strange?
What less than wonders from the wonderful?
What less than miracles from God can flow?
Admit a God—that mystery supreme!
That cause uncaused! all other wonders cease:
Nothing is marvellous for him to do:
Deny him—all is mystery besides;
Millions of mysteries! each darker far
Than that thy wisdom would, unwisely, shun.
If weak thy faith, why choose the harder side?
We nothing know but what is marvellous;
Yet what is marvellous we can't believe.
So weak our reason, and so great our God,
What most surprises in the sacred page,
Or full as strange, or stranger, must be true.
Faith is not reason's labour, but repose.
To faith and virtue why so backward, man?
From hence;—the present strongly strikes us all;
The future, faintly: can we, then, be men?
If men, Lorenzo! the reverse is right.
Reason is man's peculiar; sense the brute's.
The present is the scanty realm of Sense;
The future, Reason's empire unconfined:
On that expending all her godlike power,
She plans, provides, expatiates, triumphs, there:
There builds her blessings! there expects her praise;
And nothing asks of Fortune or of men.
And what is Reason? be she thus defined;
Reason is upright stature in the soul.
Oh! be a man,—and strive to be a god.
'For what? (thou say'st) to damp the joys of life?—
No; to give heart and substance to thy joys.
That tyrant, Hope, mark how she domineers;
She bids us quit realities for dreams,
Safety and peace for hazard and alarm.
That tyrant o'er the tyrants of the soul,
She bids Ambition quit its taken prize,
Spurn the luxuriant branch on which it sits,
Though bearing crowns, to spring at distant game,
And plunge in toils and dangers—for repose.
If hope precarious, and of things, when gained,
Of little moment and as little stay,
Can sweeten toils and dangers into joys,
What then that hope which nothing can defeat,
Our leave unasked? rich hope of boundless bliss!
Bliss past man's power to paint it, time's to close!
This hope is earth's most estimable prize;
This is man's portion, while no more than man.
Hope, of all passions, most befriends us here;
Passions of prouder name befriend us less.
Joy has her tears, and Transport has her death:
Hope, like a cordial, innocent, though strong,
Man's heart, at once, inspirits and serenes,
Nor makes him pay his wisdom for his joys:
'Tis all our present state can safely bear,
Health to the frame! and vigour to the mind!
A joy attempered! a chastised delight!
Like the fair summer-evening, mild and sweet!
'Tis man's full cup, his paradise below!
A blessed hereafter, then, or hoped or gained,
Is all,—our whole of happiness! full proof
I choose no trivial or inglorious theme.
And know, ye foes to song! (well-meaning men,
Though quite forgotten* half your Bible's praise!)
Important truths, in spite of verse, may please:
Grave minds you praise, nor can you praise too much,
If there is weight in an eternity,
Let the grave listen, and be graver still.

NIGHT VIII.

VIRTUE'S APOLOGY; OR, THE MAN OF THE WORLD ANSWERED.

IN WHICH ARE CONSIDERED, THE LOVE OF THIS LIFE; THE AMBITION AND PLEASURE, WITH THE WIT AND WISDOM OF THE WORLD.

And has all Nature, then, espoused my part?
Have I bribed Heaven and Earth to plead against thee?
And is thy soul immortal?—What remains?
All, all, Lorenzo!—make immortal blessed.
Unblessed immortals!—what can shock us more?
And yet Lorenzo still affects the world;
There stows his treasure; thence his title draws,
Man of the World! (for such wouldst thou be called)
And art thou proud of that inglorious style?
Proud of reproach? for a reproach it was,
In ancient days, and Christian,—in an age
When men were men, and not ashamed of Heaven,—
Fired their ambition, as it crowned their joy!
Sprinkled with dews, from the Castilian font,
Fain would I rebaptize thee, and confer
A purer spirit, and a nobler name.
Thy fond attachments, fatal and inflamed,
Point out my path, and dictate to my song.
To thee the world how fair! how strongly strike
Ambition! and gay Pleasure stronger still
Thy triple bane! the triple bolt. that lays

* The poetical parts of it.

Thy virtue dead; be these my triple theme;
Nor shall thy wit or wisdom be forgot.
Common the theme; not so the song, if she
My song invokes, Urania! deigns to smile.
The charm that chains us to the world, her foe,
If she dissolves, the man of earth, at once,
Starts from his trance, and sighs for other scenes;
Scenes, where these sparks of night, these stars, shall shine
Unnumbered suns, (for all things as they are,
The blessed behold,) and, in one glory, pour
Their blended blaze on man's astonished sight;
A blaze—the least illustrious object there.
Lorenzo! since Eternal is at hand,
To swallow Time's ambitions; as the vast
Leviathan the bubbles vain that ride
High on the foaming billow; what avail
High titles, high descent, attainments high,
If unattained our highest? O Lorenzo!
What lofty thoughts, these elements above,
What towering hopes, what sallies from the sun,
What grand surveys of destiny divine,
And pompous presage of unfathomed fate,
Should roll in bosoms where a spirit burns,
Bound for Eternity! in bosoms read
By Him, who foibles in archangels sees!
On human hearts He bends a jealous eye,
And marks, and in Heaven's register enrols,
The rise and progress of each option there;
Sacred to Doomsday! that the page unfolds,
And spreads us to the gaze of gods and men.
And what an option, O Lorenzo! thine?
This world! and this, unrivalled by the skies!
A world where lust of pleasure, grandeur, gold,
Three demons that divide its realms between them,
With strokes alternate buffet to and fro
Man's restless heart, their sport, their flying ball;
Till, with the giddy circle sick and tired,
It pants for peace, and drops into despair.
Such is the world Lorenzo sets above
That glorious promise angels were esteemed
Too mean to bring; a promise their Adored
Descended to communicate, and press,
By counsel, miracle, life, death, on man.
Such is the world Lorenzo's wisdom wooes,
And on its thorny pillow seeks repose;
A pillow which, like opiates ill-prepared,
Intoxicates, but not composes; fills
The visionary mind with gay chimeras,
All the wild trash of sleep, without the rest:
What unfeigned travel, and what dreams of joy!
How frail men, things! how momentary, both!
Fantastic chase, of shadows hunting shades!
The gay, the busy, equal, though unlike;
Equal in wisdom, differently wise!
Through flowery meadows, and through dreary wastes,
One bustling, and one dancing, into death.

There 's not a day but, to the man of thought,
Betrays some secret that throws new reproach
On life, and makes him sick of seeing more.
The scenes of business tell us—'What are men;'
The scenes of pleasure—'What is all beside:'
The others we despise; and here ourselves.
Amid disgust eternal dwells delight?—
'Tis approbation strikes the string of joy.
What wondrous prize has kindled this career,
Stuns with the din, and chokes us with the dust,
On life's gay stage, one inch above the grave?
The proud run up and down in quest of eyes;
The sensual, in pursuit of something worse;
The grave, of gold; the politic, of power;
And all, of other butterflies as vain!
As eddies draw things frivolous and light,
How is man's heart by vanity drawn in!
On the swift circle of returning toys
Whirled, straw-like, round and round, and then ingulfed,
Where gay delusion darkens to despair!
'This is a beaten track.'—Is this a track
Should not be beaten? never beat enough,
Till enough learned the truths it would inspire.
Shall Truth be silent because folly frowns?
Turn the world's history, what find we there
But Fortune's sports, or Nature's cruel claims,
Or woman's artifice, or man's revenge,
And endless inhumanities on man?
Fame's trumpet seldom sounds, but like the knell,
It brings bad tidings: how it hourly blows
Man's misadventures round the listening world!
Man is the tale of narrative old Time;
Sad tale! which high as Paradise begins;
As if, the toil of travel to delude,
From stage to stage, in his eternal round,
The Days, his daughters, as they spin our hours
On Fortune's wheel, where accident unthought
Oft, in a moment, snaps life's strongest thread,
Each, in her turn, some tragic story tells
With now and then, a wretched farce between,
And fills his chronicle with human woes.
Time's daughters, true as those of men, deceive us;
Not one but puts some cheat on all mankind.
While in their father's bosom, not yet ours,
They flatter our fond hopes, and promise much
Of amiable, but hold him not o'erwise
Who dares to trust them, and laugh round the year,
At still-confiding, still-confounded man,
Confiding, though confounded; hoping on,
Untaught by trial, unconvinced by proof,
And ever looking for the never-seen.
Life to the last, like hardened felons, lies.
Nor owns itself a cheat till it expires:
Its little joys go out by one and one,
And leave poor man at length, in perfect night;
Night darker than what now involves the pole.

O Thou who dost permit these ills to fall
For gracious ends, and wouldst that man should mourn!
O Thou, whose hands this goodly fabric framed,
Who know'st it best, and wouldst that man should know!
What is this sublunary world? a vapour;
A vapour all it holds; itself, a vapour;
From the damp bed of Chaos, as thy beam
Exhaled, ordained to swim its destined hour
In ambient air, then melt and disappear.
Earth's days are numbered, nor remote her doom;
As mortal, though less transient than her sons;
Yet they dote on her, as the world and they
Were both eternal, solid; Thou a dream.
They dote, on what? immortal views apart,
A region of outsides! a land of shadows!
A fruitful field of flowery promises!
A wilderness of joys! perplexed with doubts,
And sharp with thorns! a troubled ocean, spread
With bold adventurers, their all on board;
No second hope, if here their fortune frowns;
Frown soon it must. Of various rates they sail,
Of ensigns various; all alike in this,
All restless, anxious, tossed with hopes and fears
In calmest skies; obnoxious all to storm,
And stormy the most general blast of life:
All bound for Happiness; yet few provide
The chart of Knowledge, pointing where it lies,
Or Virtue's helm, to shape the course designed:
All, more or less, capricious Fate lament,
Now lifted by the tide, and now resorbed,
And farther from their wishes than before:
All, more or less, against each other dash,
To mutual hurt, by gusts of passion driven,
And suffering more from folly than from Fate.
Ocean! thou dreadful and tumultuous home
Of dangers, at eternal war with man!
Death's capital, where most he domineers,
With all his chosen terrors frowning round.
(Though lately feasted high at Albion's cost*)
Wide-opening, and loud-roaring still for more!
Too faithful mirror! how dost thou reflect
The melancholy face of human life!
The strong resemblance tempts me farther still:
And, haply, Britain may be deeper struck
By moral truth, in such a mirror seen,
Which Nature holds for ever at her eye.
Self-flattered, unexperienced, high in hope
When young, with sanguine cheer and streamers gay,
We cut our cable, launch into the world,
And fondly dream each wind and star our friend;
All in some darling enterprise embarked:
But where is he can fathom its event?
Amid a multitude of artless hands,
Ruin's sure perquisite! her lawful prize!
Some steer aright, but the black blast blows hard,
And puffs them wide of Hope: with hearts of proof,
Full against wind and tide, some win their way,
And when strong Effort has deserved the port,
And tugged it into view, 'tis won! 'tis lost!
Though strong their oar, still stronger is their fate
They strike! and while they triumph, they expire.
In stress of weather most, some sink outright;
O'er them, and o'er their names, the billows close;
To-morrow knows not they were ever born.
Others a short memorial leave behind,
Like a flag floating, when the bark's ingulfed,
It floats a moment, and is seen no more.
One Cæsar lives; a thousand are forgot.
How few, beneath auspicious planets born,
(Darlings of providence! fond Fate's elect!)
With swelling sails make good the promised port,
With all their wishes freighted! yet ev'n these,
Freighted with all their wishes, soon complain;
Free from misfortune, not from Nature free,
They still are men; and when is man secure?
As fatal time as storm! the rush of years
Beats down their strength; their numberless escapes
In ruin end. And now their proud success
But plants new terrors on the victor's brow:
What pain to quit the world, just made their own,
Their nest so deeply downed, and built so high!
Too low they build, who build beneath the stars.
Wo then apart (if wo apart can be
From mortal man,) and Fortune at our nod,
The gay! rich! great! triumphant! and august!
What are they?—The most happy (strange to say)
Convince me most of human misery.
What are they? smiling wretches of to-morrow!
More wretched, then, than e'er their slave can be,
Their treacherous blessings, at the day of need,
Like other faithless friends, unmask and sting:
Then what provoking indigence in wealth!
What aggravated impotence in power!
High titles, then, what insult of their pain!
If that sole anchor, equal to the waves,
Immortal Hope! defies not the rude storm,
Takes comfort from the foaming billow's rage
And makes a welcome harbour of the tomb.
Is this a sketch of what thy soul admires?—
'But here (thou say'st) the miseries of life
Are huddled in a group: a more distinct
Survey, perhaps, might bring thee better news.
Look on life's stages; they speak plainer still;
The plainer they, the deeper wilt thou sigh.
Look on thy lovely boy; in him behold
The best that can befal the best on earth;
The boy has virtue by his mother's side:
Yes, on Florello look: a father's heart
Is tender, though the man's is made of stone.
The truth, through such a medium seen, may make
Impression deep, and fondness prove thy friend.

* Admiral Balchen, &c.

Florello! lately cast on this rude coast
A helpless infant, now a heedless child.
To poor Clarissa's throes thy care succeeds;
Care full of love, and yet severe as hate!
O'er thy soul's joy how oft thy fondness frowns!
Needful austerities his will restrain,
As thorns fence in the tender plant from harm.
As yet his Reason can not go alone.
But asks a sterner nurse to lead it on.
His little heart is often terrified;
The blush of morning, in his cheek, turns pale;
Its pearly dew-drop trembles in his eye,
His harmless eye! and drowns an angel there.
Ah! what avails his innocence? the task
Enjoined must discipline his early powers;
He learns to sigh ere he is known to sin;
Guiltless and sad! a wretch before the fall!
How cruel this! more cruel to forbear.
Our nature such, with necessary pains
We purchase prospects of precarious peace:
Though not a father, this might steal a sigh.
Suppose him disciplined aright (if not,
'Twill sink our poor account to poorer still,)
Ripe from the tutor, proud of liberty,
He leaps inclosure, bounds into the world;
The world is taken, after ten years' toil,
Like ancient Troy, and all its joys his own.
Alas! the world's a tutor more severe,
Its lessons hard, and ill deserves his pains;
Unteaching all his virtuous Nature taught,
Or books, (fair Virtue's advocates) inspired.
For who receives him into public life?
Men of the world, the terræ-filial breed,
Welcome the modest stranger to their sphere,
(Which glittered long, at distance in his sight)
And in their hospitable arms inclose;
Men who think nought so strong of the romance,
So rank knight-errant, as a real friend;
Men that act up to Reason's golden rule,
All weakness of affection quite subdued;
Men that would blush at being thought sincere,
And feign, for glory, the few faults they want;
That love a lie, where truth would pay as well,
As if, to them, Vice shone her own reward.
Lorenzo! canst thou bear a shocking sight?
Such, for Florello's sake, 'twill now appear.
See the steeled files of seasoned veterans,
Train'd to the world, in burnished falsehood bright;
Deep in the fatal stratagems of peace,
All soft sensation, in the throng, rubbed off;
All their keen purpose in politeness sheathed;
His friends eternal—during interest;
His foes implacable, when worth their while;
At war with every welfare but their own;
As wise as Lucifer, and half as good;
And by whom none, but Lucifer, can gain—
Naked through these, (so common Fate ordains)
Naked of heart, his cruel course he runs,
Stung out of all most amiable in life,
Prompt truth, and open thought, and smiles unfeigned;
Affection, as his species wide diffused,
Noble presumptions to mankind's renown,
Ingenuous trust, and confidence in love.
These claims to joy (if mortals joy might claim)
Will cost him many a sigh, till time and pains,
From the slow mistress of this school, Experience,
And her assistant, pausing, pale Distrust,
Purchase a dear-bought clue to lead his youth
Through serpentine obliquities of life,
And the dark labyrinth of human hearts.
And happy, if the clue shall come so cheap.
For while we learn to fence with public guilt,
Full oft we feel its foul contagion too,
If less than heavenly virtue is our guard.
Thus a strange kind of cursed necessity
Brings down the sterling temper of his soul,
By base alloy, to bear the current stamp,
Below called Wisdom; sinks him into safety,
And brands him into credit with the world,
Where specious titles dignify disgrace,
And Nature's injuries are arts of life;
Where brighter reason prompts to bolder crimes,
And heavenly talents make infernal hearts,
That unsurmountable extreme of guilt!
Poor Machiavel! who labour'd hard his plan,
Forgot that Genius need not go to school;
Forgot that man, without a tutor wise,
His plan had practised long before 'twas writ.
The world's all title page; there's no contents.
The world's all face: the man who shows his heart
Is hooted for his nudities, and scorned.
A man I knew who lived upon a smile,
And well it fed him; he looked plump and fair,
While rankest venom foamed through every vein.
Lorenzo! what I tell thee take not ill!
Living, he fawned on every fool alive;
And, dying, cursed the friend on whom he lived.
To such proficients thou art half a saint!
In foreign realms (for thou hast travelled far)
How curious to contemplate two state-rooks,
Studious their nests to feather in a trice,
With all the necromantics of their art,
Playing the game of faces on each other,
Making court sweet-meats of their latent gall,
In foolish hope to steal each other's trust;
Both cheating, both exulting, both deceived,
And, sometimes, both (let earth rejoice) undone!
Their parts we doubt not, but be that their shame.
Shall men of talents, fit to rule mankind,
Stoop to mean wiles that would disgrace a fool;
And lose the thanks of these few friends they serve?
For who can thank the man he can not see?
Why so much cover? it defeats itself.
Ye that know all things! know ye not men's hearts
Are therefore known, because they are concealed?

For why concealed?—the cause they need not tell.
I give him joy that's awkward at a lie;
Whose feeble nature Truth keeps still in awe;
His incapacity is his renown.
'Tis great, 'tis manly, to disdain disguise;
It shows our spirit, or it proves our strength.
Thou say'st 'tis needful! is it therefore right?—
Howe'er, I grant it some small sign of grace
To strain at an excuse: and wouldst thou, then,
Escape that cruel need? thou may'st with ease;
Think no post needful that demands a knave.
When late our Civil helm was shifting hands,
So Pelham thought: think better if you can.
But this how rare! the public path of life
Is dirty:—yet allow that dirt its due,
It makes the noble mind more noble still.
The world's no neuter; it will wound or save;
Our virtue quench, or indignation fire.
You say the world, well-known, will make a man.—
The world, well-known, will give our hearts to Heaven,
Or make us demons, long before we die.
To show how fair the world, thy mistress, shines,
Take either part; sure ills attend the choice:
Sure, though not equal, detriment ensues.
Not Virtue's self is deified on earth;
Virtue has her relapses, conflicts, foes;
Foes that ne'er fail to make her feel their hate.
Virtue has her peculiar set of pains.
True friends to virtue, last and least complain;
But if they sigh, can others hope to smile?
If Wisdom has her miseries to mourn,
How can poor Folly lead a happy life?
And if both suffer, what has earth to boast,
Where he most happy who the least laments?
Where much, much patience, the most envied state,
And some forgiveness, needs, the best of friends?
For friend or happy life who looks not higher,
Of neither shall he find the shadow here.
The world's sworn advocate, without a fee,
Lorenzo smartly, with a smile, replies;
'Thus far thy song is right, and all must own
Virtue has her peculiar set of pains:—
And joys peculiar who to Vice denies?
If vice it is with nature to comply:
If pride and sense are so predominant,
To check, not overcome them, makes a saint,
Can Nature in a plainer voice proclaim
Pleasure and glory, the chief good of man?'—
Can pride and sensuality rejoice?
From purity of thought all pleasure springs,
And from an humble spirit all our peace.
Ambition, Pleasure! let us talk of these;
Of these the Porch and Academy talked;
Of these each following age had much to say,
Yet unexhausted, still, the needful theme.
Who talks of these, to mankind all at once
He talks; for where the saint from either free?

Are these thy refuge?—No; these rush upon thee,
Thy vitals seize, and, vulture-like, devour:
I'll try if I can pluck thee from thy rock,
Prometheus! from this barren ball of earth,
If reason can unchain thee, thou art free.
And first, thy Caucasus, Ambition, calls;
Mountain of torments! eminence of woes!
Of courted woes! and courted through mistake!
'Tis not ambition charms thee; 'tis a cheat
Will make thee start, as H—— at his Moor.
Dost grasp at greatness? first know what it is.
Think'st thou thy greatness in distinction lies?
Not in the feather, wave it e'er so high,
By Fortune stuck, to mark us from the throng,
Is glory lodged: 'tis lodged in the reverse;
In that which joins, in that which equals all,
The monarch and his slave—'a deathless soul,
Unbounded prospect, and immortal kin,
A Father-God, and brothers in the skies;'
Elder, indeed, in time, but less remote
In excellence, perhaps, than thought by man.
Why greater what can fall than what can rise?
If still delirious, now, Lorenzo! go,
And, with thy full-blown brothers of the world,
Throw scorn around thee; cast it on thy slaves,
Thy slaves and equals. How scorn cast on them
Rebounds on thee! If man is mean, as man,
Art thou a god? If Fortune makes him so,
Beware the consequence: a maxim that
Which draws a monstrous picture of mankind,
Where, in the drapery, the man is lost;
Externals fluttering, and the soul forgot.
Thy greatest glory, when disposed to boast,
Boast that aloud in which thy servants share.
We wisely strip the steed we mean to buy.
Judge we, in their caparisons, of men,
It nought avails thee where, but what, thou art.
All the distinctions of this little life
Are quite cutaneous, foreign to the man.
When through Death's streights earth's subtle serpents creep,
Which wriggle into wealth, or climb renown,
As crooked Satan the forbidden tree,
They leave their party-coloured robe behind,
All that now glitters, while they rear aloft
Their brazen crests, and hiss at us below.
Of Fortune's focus strip them, yet alive,
Strip them of body too; nay, closer still,
Away with all but moral in their minds,
And let what then remains impose their name,
Pronounce them weak or worthy, great or mean.
How mean that snuff of glory Fortune lights,
And Death puts out! Dost thou demand a test,
A test, at once, infallible and short,
Of real greatness? that man greatly lives,
Whate'er his fate or fame, who greatly dies,
High-flushed with hope where heroes shall despair
If this a true criterion, many courts,
Illustrious, might afford but few grandees.

The Almighty, from his throne, on earth surveys
Nought greater than an honest, humble heart;
An humble heart, his residence! pronounced
His second seat, and rival to the skies.
The private path, the secret acts of men,
If noble, far the noblest of our lives!
How far above Lorenzo's glory sits
The illustrious master of a name unknown?
Whose worth unrivalled, and unwitnessed, loves
Life's sacred shades where gods converse with men,
And peace, beyond the world's conceptions, smiles;
As thou (now dark) before we part shalt see.
But thy great soul this skulking glory scorns:
Lorenzo's sick, but when Lorenzo's seen,
And when he shrugs at public business, lies.
Denied the public eye, the public voice,
As if he lived on others breath, he dies.
Fain would he make the world his pedestal,
Mankind the gazers, the sole figure he.
Knows he, that mankind praise against their will,
And mix as much detraction as they can?
Knows he, that faithless Fame her whispers has,
As well as trumpet? that his vanity
Is so much tickled, from not hearing all?
Knows this all-knower, that from itch of praise,
Or from an itch more sordid, when he shines,
Taking his country by five hundred ears,
Senates at once admire him and despise,
With modest laughter lining loud applause,
Which makes the smile more mortal to his fame?
His fame which (like the mighty Cæsar) crowned
With laurels, in full senate, greatly falls,
By seeming friends, that honour and destroy.
We rise in glory as we sink in pride;
Where boasting ends, there dignity begins;
And yet, mistaken beyond all mistake,
The blind Lorenzo's proud—of being proud,
And dreams himself ascending, in his fall.

An eminence, though fancied, turns the brain;
All vice wants hellebore; but of all vice
Pride loudest calls, and for the largest bowl;
Because, unlike all other vice, it flies,
In fact, the point in fancy most pursued.
Who court applause oblige the world in this;
They gratify man's passion to refuse.
Superior honour, when assumed, is lost:
E'en good men turn banditti, and rejoice,
Like Kouli-Kan, in plunder of the proud.

'Though somewhat disconcerted, steady still
To the world's cause; with half a face of joy,
Lorenzo cries,—'Be, then, Ambition cast;
Ambition's dearer far stands unimpeached,
Gay Pleasure! proud Ambition is her slave;
For her he soars at great, and hazards ill;
For her he fights, and bleeds, or overcomes,
And paves his way, with crowns, to reach her smile.
Who can resist her charms?—Or should? Lorenzo!
What mortal shall resist where angels yield?
Pleasure's the mistress of ethereal powers;
For her contend the rival gods above;
Pleasure's the mistress of the world below,
And well it is for man that Pleasure charms;
How would all stagnate but for Pleasure's ray
How would the frozen stream of action cease!
What is the pulse of this so busy world?
The love of pleasure: that, through every vein,
Throws motion, warmth, and shuts out death from life.
Though various are the tempers of mankind,
Pleasure's gay family holds all in chains.
Some most affect the black, and some the fair;
Some honest pleasure court, and some obscene.
Pleasures obscene are various, as the throng
Of passions that can err in human hearts,
Mistake their objects, or transgress their bounds.
Think you there's but one whoredom? whoredom all,
But when our reason licenses delight.
Dost doubt, Lorenzo? thou shalt doubt no more.
Thy father chides thy gallantries, yet hugs
An ugly, common harlot in the dark,
A rank adulterer with others' gold;
And that hag, Vengeance, in a corner charms.
Hatred her brothel has, as well as Love,
Where horrid epicures debauch in blood.
Whate'er the motive, Pleasure is the mark:
For her the black assassin draws his sword;
For her dark statesmen trim their midnight lamp,
To which no single sacrifice may fall;
For her the saint abstains, the miser starves;
The stoic proud, for Pleasure, pleasure scorned;
For her Affliction's daughters grief indulge,
And find, or hope, a luxury in tears;
For her guilt, shame, toil, danger, we defy,
And, with an aim voluptuous, rush on death:
Thus universal her despotic power!
And as her empire wide, her praise is just.
Patron of Pleasure! Doter on delight!
I am thy rival; pleasure I profess;
Pleasure the purpose of my gloomy song.
Pleasure is nought but Virtue's gayer name;
I wrong her still, I rate her worth too low:
Virtue the root, and pleasure is the flower;
And honest Epicurus' foes were fools.
But this sounds harsh, and gives the wise offence,
If o'erstrained wisdom still retains the name.
How knits Austerity her cloudy brow,
And blames, as bold and hazardous, the praise
Of pleasure, to mankind unpraised, too dear!
Ye modern stoics! hear my soft reply;
Their senses men will trust: we can't impose,
Or, if we would, is imposition right?
Own honey sweet; but, owning, add this sting,
'When mixed with poison it is deadly too.'

Truth never was indebted to a lie.
Is nought but virtue to be praised as good?
Why then is health preferred before disease?
What Nature loves is good, without her leave;
And where no future drawback cries, 'Beware,'
Pleasure, though not from virtue, should prevail:
'Tis balm to life, and gratitude to Heaven.
How cold our thanks for bounties unenjoyed!
The love of Pleasure in man's eldest-born,
Born in his cradle, living to his tomb;
Wisdom, her younger sister, though more grave,
Was meant to minister, and not to mar,
Imperial Pleasure, queen of human hearts.
Lorenzo! thou, her majesty's renowned,
Though uncoift counsel, learned in the world!
Who think'st thyself a Murray, with disdain
May'st look on me: yet, my Demosthenes!
Can'st thou plead Pleasure's cause as well as I?
Know'st thou her nature, purpose, parentage?
Attend my song, and thou shalt know them all;
And know thyself, and know thyself to be
(Strange truth!) the most abstemious man alive.
Tell not Calista, she will laugh thee dead,
Or send thee to her hermitage with L——.
Absurd presumption? thou who never knew'st
A serious thought! shalt thou dare dream of joy?
No man e'er found a happy life by chance,
Or yawned it into being with a wish:
Or with the snout of grovelling Appetite
E'er smelt it out, and grubbed it from the dirt.
An art it is, and must be learned; and learned
With unremitting effort, or be lost,
And leaves us perfect blockheads in our bliss.
The clouds may drop down titles and estates;
Wealth may seek us, but Wisdom must be sought;
Sought before all; but (how unlike all else
We seek on earth!) 'tis never sought in vain.
First, Pleasure's birth, rise, strength, and grandeur see:
Brought forth by Wisdom, nursed by Discipline,
By Patience taught, by Perseverance crowned.
She rears her head majestic; round her throne,
Erected in the bosom of the just,
Each virtue, listed, forms her manly guard.
For what are virtues? (formidable name!)
What but the fountain or defence of joy?
Why then commanded? need mankind commands,
At once to merit and to make their bliss!—
Great Legislator! scarce so great as kind!
If men are rational, and love delight,
Thy gracious law but flatters human choice:
In the transgression lies the penalty;
And they the most indulge who most obey.
Of Pleasure, next, the final cause explore;
Its mighty purpose, its important end.
Not to turn human brutal, but to build
Divine on human, Pleasure came from Heaven:
In aid to Reason was the goddess sent,
To call up all its strength by such a charm.
Pleasure, first, succours virtue; in return,
Virtue gives Pleasure an eternal reign.
What but the pleasure of food, friendship, faith,
Supports life natural, civil, and divine?
'Tis from the pleasure of repast we live;
'Tis from the pleasure of applause we please;
'Tis from the pleasure of belief we pray;
(All prayer would cease, if unbelieved the prize)
It serves ourselves, our species, and our God;
And to serve more is past the sphere of man.
Glide then, for ever, Pleasure's sacred stream!
Through Eden, as Euphrates ran, it runs,
And fosters every growth of happy life;
Makes a new Eden where it flows,—but such
As must be lost, Lorenzo! by thy fall.
'What mean I by thy fall?—Thou'lt shortly see.
While Pleasure's nature is at large displayed,
Already sung her origin and ends:
Those glorious ends by kind, or by degree,
When Pleasure violates, 'tis then a vice,
And vengeance too; it hastens into pain.
From due refreshment life, health, reason, joy;
From wild excess pain, grief, distraction, death;
Heaven's justice this proclaims, and that her love
What greater evil can I wish my foe,
Than his full draught of pleasure from a cask
Unbroached by just authority, ungaged
By temperance, by reason unrefined?
A thousand demons lurk within the lee.
Heaven, others, and ourselves! uninjured these
Drink deep; the deeper, then, the more divine:
Angels are angels from indulgence there.
'Tis unrepenting pleasure makes a god!
Dost think thyself a god from other joys?
A victim rather! shortly, sure to bleed.
The wrong must mourn. Can Heaven's appointments fail?
Can man outwit Omnipotence? strike out
A self-wrought happiness, unmeant by him
Who made us, and the world we would enjoy?
Who forms an instrument ordains from whence
Its dissonance or harmony shall arise.
Heaven bid the soul this mortal frame inspire;
Bid Virtue's ray divine inspire the soul
With unprecarious flows of vital joy;
And without breathing man as well might hope
For life, as, without piety, for peace.
'Is virtue, then, and piety the same?'—
No; piety is more: 'tis virtue's source,
Mother of every worth, as that of joy.
Men of the world this doctrine ill digest;
They smile at piety, yet boast aloud
'Good-will to men,' nor know they strive to part
What Nature joins, and thus confute themselves
With piety begins all good on earth;
'Tis the first born of Rationality!
Conscience, her first law broken, wounded lies
Enfeebled, lifeless, impotent to good.
A feigned affection bounds her utmost power

Some we can't love, but for th' Almighty's sake;
A foe to God was ne'er true friend to man.
Some sinister intent taints all he does,
And in his kindest actions he's unkind.
On piety humanity is built,
And on humanity much happiness;
And yet still more on piety itself.
A soul in commerce with her God is Heaven
Feels not the tumults and the shocks of life,
The whirls of passions, and the strokes of heart.
A Deity believed, is joy begun;
A Deity adored, is joy advanced;
A Deity beloved, is joy matured!
Each branch of piety delight inspires;
Faith builds a bridge from this world to the next,
O'er Death's dark gulf, and all its horror hides:
Praise, the sweet exhalation of our joy,
That joy exalts, and makes it sweeter still:
Prayer ardent opens Heaven, lets down a stream
Of glory on the consecrated hour
Of man, in audience with the Deity;
Who worships the great God, that instant joins
The first in Heaven, and sets his foot on hell.
Lorenzo! when wast thou at church before?
Thou think'st the service long: but is it just?—
Though just, unwelcome. Thou hadst rather tread
Unhallowed ground: the Muse, to win thine ear,
Must take an air less solemn. She complies.
Good Conscience! at the sound the world retires,
Verse disaffects it, and Lorenzo smiles;
Yet has she her seraglio full of charms,
And such as age shall heighten, not impair.
Art thou dejected? is thy mind o'ercast?
Amid her fair ones thou the fairest choose
To chase thy gloom.—'Go, fix some weighty truth;
Chain down some passion; do some generous good;
Teach Ignorance to see, or Grief to smile;
Correct thy friend; befriend thy greatest foe;
Or, with warm heart and confidence divine,
Spring up, and lay strong hold on Him who made thee,
Thy gloom is scattered, sprightly spirits flow,
Though withered is thy vine, and harp unstrung.
Dost call the bowl, the viol, and the dance,
Loud mirth, mad laughter? Wretched comforters!
Physicians! more than half of thy disease.
Laughter, though never censured yet as sin,
(Pardon a thought that only seems severe)
Is half immoral; is it much indulged?
By venting spleen, or dissipating thought,
It shows a scorner, or it makes a fool,
And sins; as hurting others, or ourselves.
'Tis pride, or emptiness, applies the straw
That tickles little minds to mirth effuse;
Of grief approaching the portentous sign!
The house of laughter makes a house of wo.
A man triumphant is a monstrous sight;
A man dejected is a sight as mean.
What cause for triumph when such ills abound?
What for dejection, where presides a Power
Who called us into being—to be blessed?
So grieve, as conscious grief may rise to joy:
So joy, as conscious joy to grief may fall.
Most true, a wise man never will be sad;
But neither will sonorous, bubbling mirth,
A shallow stream of happiness betray;
Too happy to be sportive, he 's serene.
Yet wouldst thou laugh (but at thy own expense)
This counsel strange would I presume to give—
'Retire, and read thy Bible, to be gay.'
There truths abound of sovereign aid to peace:
Ah! do not prize them less because inspired,
As thou and thine are apt and proud to do.
If not inspired, that pregnant page had stood,
Time's treasure! and the wonder of the wise!
Thou think'st, perhaps, thy soul alone at stake
Alas!—should men mistake thee for a fool;—
What man of taste for genius, wisdom, truth,
Though tender of thy fame, could interpose?
Believe me, sense, here, acts a double part,
And the true critic is a Christian too.
But these, thou think'st, are gloomy paths to joy.
True joy and sunshine ne'er was found at first.
They first themselves offend who greatly please,
And travel only gives us sound repose.
Heaven sells all pleasure; effort is the price.
The joys of conquest are the joys of man;
And Glory the victorious laurels spreads
O'er Pleasure's pure, perpetual, placid stream.
There is a time when toil must be preferred,
Or joy, by mistimed fondness, is undone.
A man of pleasure is a man of pains.
Thou wilt not take the trouble to be blessed.
False joys, indeed, are born from want of thought·
From thought's full bent and energy the true;
And that demands a mind in equal poize,
Remote from gloomy grief and glaring joy.
Much joy not only speaks small happiness,
But happiness that shortly must expire.
Can joy, unbottomed in reflection, stand?
And, in a tempest, can reflection live?
Can joy, like thine, secure itself an hour?
Can joy, like thine, meet accident unshocked?
Or ope the door to honest poverty?
Or talk with threatening Death, and not turn pale?
In such a world, and such a nature, these
Are needful fundamentals of delight:
These fundamentals give delight indeed;
Delight pure, delicate, and durable;
Delight unshaken, masculine, divine;
A constant and a sound, but serious, joy.
Is Joy the daughter of Severity?
It is:—yet far my doctrine from severe.
'Rejoice for ever:' it becomes a man;
Exalts, and sets him nearer to the gods.
'Rejoice for ever,' Nature cries; 'Rejoice!'
And drinks to man in her nectarious cup,
Mixed up of delicates for every sense;

To the great Founder of the bounteous feast
Drinks glory, gratitude, eternal praise;
And he that will not pledge her is a churl.
Ill firmly to support, good fully taste,
Is the whole science of felicity;
Yet, sparing, pledge; her bowl is not the best
Mankind can boast.—'A rational repast,
Exertion, vigilance, a mind in arms,
A military discipline of thought,
To foil temptation in the doubtful field.
And ever-waking ardour for the right.'
'Tis these first give, then guard, a cheerful heart.
Nought, that is right, think little; well aware
What Reason bids, God bids: by his command
How aggrandized the smallest thing we do!
Thus nothing is insipid to the wise;
To thee insipid all but what is mad,
Joys seasoned high, and tasting strong of guilt.
'Mad! (thou reply'st, with indignation fired)
Of ancient sages proud to tread the steps,
I follow Nature.'—Follow Nature still,
But look it be thine own. Is Conscience, then,
No part of Nature? is she not supreme?
Thou regicide! O raise her from the dead!
Then follow Nature, and resemble God.
When, spite of conscience, pleasure is pursued,
Man's nature is unnaturally pleased;
And what 's unnatural is painful too
At intervals, and must disgust e'en thee!
The fact thou know'st; but not, perhaps, the cause.
Virtue's foundations with the world's were laid:
Heaven mixed her with our make, and twisted close
Her sacred interest with the strings of life:
Who breaks her awful mandate shocks himself,
His better self: and is it greater pain
Our soul should murmur, or our dust repine?
And one, in their eternal war, must bleed.
If one must suffer, which should least be spared?
The pains of mind surpass the pains of sense:
Ask, then, the Gout, what torment is in guilt?—
The joys of sense to mental joys are mean:
Sense on the present only feeds: the soul
On past and future forages for joy:
'Tis hers, by retrospect, through time to range,
And forward time's great sequel to survey.
Could human courts take vengeance on the mind,
Axes might rust, and racks and gibbets fall.
Guard then thy mind, and leave the rest to Fate?
Lorenzo! wilt thou never be a man?
The man is dead who for the body lives,
Lured by the beating of his pulse, to list
With every lust that wars against his peace,
And sets him quite at variance with himself.
Thyself first know, then love: a self there is,
Of virtue fond, that kindles at her charms:
A self there is, as fond of every vice,
While every virtue wounds it to the heart;
Humility degrades it, Justice robs,
Blessed Bounty beggars it, fair Truth betrays,
And godlike Magnanimity destroys.
This self, when rival to the former, scorn;
When not in competition, kindly treat,
Defend it, feed it:—but when Virtue bids,
Toss it or to the fowls or to the flames.
And why? 'tis love of pleasure bids thee bleed:
Comply, or own self-love extinct, or blind.
For what is vice?—Self-love in a mistake:
A poor blind merchant buying joys too dear.
And virtue what? 'tis self-love in her wits,
Quite skilful in the market of delight.
Self-love's good sense is love of that dread Power,
From whom herself, and all she can enjoy.
Other self-love is but disguised self-hate,
More mortal than the malice of our foes;
A self-hate now scarce felt, then felt full sore,
When being cursed, extinction loud-implored,
And every thing preferred to what we are.
Yet this self-love Lorenzo makes his choice,
And, in this choice triumphant, boasts of joy.
How is his want of happiness betrayed
By disaffection to the present hour!
Imagination wanders far a-field;
The future pleases: why? the present pains.—
"But that's a secret."—Yes, which all men know
And know from thee, discovered unawares.
Thy ceaseless agitation restless rolls
From cheat to cheat, impatient of a pause.
What is it?—'Tis the cradle of the soul,
From Instinct sent, to rock her in disease,
Which her physician, Reason, will not cure.
A poor expedient! yet thy best; and while
It mitigates thy pain, it owns it too.
Such are Lorenzo's wretched remedies!
The weak have remedies, the wise have joys.
Superior wisdom is superior bliss.
And what sure mark distinguishes the wise?
Consistent Wisdom ever wills the same;
Thy fickle wish is ever on the wing.
Sick of herself is Folly's character,
As Wisdom's is a modest self-applause.
A change of evils is thy good supreme,
Nor but in motion canst thou find thy rest.
Man's greatest strength is shown in standing still.
The first sure symptom of a mind in health
Is rest of heart, and pleasure felt at home.
False pleasure from abroad her joys imports;
Rich from within, and self-sustained, the true.
The true is fixed and solid as a rock;
Slippery the false, and tossing, as the wave.
This a wild wanderer on earth, like Cain;
That like the fabled, self-enamoured boy,
Home-contemplation her supreme delight:
She dreads an interruption from without,
Smit with her own condition, and the more
Intense she gazes, still it charms the more.
No man is happy till he thinks on earth
There breathes not a more happy than himself:
Then envy dies, and love o'erflows on all.

And love o'erflowing makes an angel here.
Such angels all, entitled to repose
Or Him who governs fate. Though tempest frowns,
Though Nature shakes, how soft to lean on Heaven!
To lean on him on whom archangels lean!
With inward eyes, and silent as the grave,
They stand collecting every beam of thought,
Till their hearts kindle with divine delight;
For all their thoughts, like angels, seen of old
In Israel's dream, come from, and go to Heaven;
Hence are they studious of sequestered scenes,
While noise and dissipation comfort thee.
Were all men happy, revellings would cease,
That opiate for inquietude within.
Lorenzo! never man was truly blessed,
But it composed and gave him such a cast,
As Folly might mistake for want of joy:
A cast, unlike the triumph of the proud;
A modest aspect, and a smile at heart.
O for a joy from thy Philander's spring!
A spring, perennial, rising in the breast,
And permanent as pure! no turbid stream
Of rapturous exultation, swelling high,
Which, like land-floods, impetuous pour awhile,
Then sink at once, and leave us in the mire.
What does the man who transient joy prefers?
What, but prefer the bubbles to the stream?
Vain are all sudden sallies of delight,
Convulsions of a weak distempered joy.
Joy's a fixed state; a tenour, not a start.
Bliss there is none but unprecarious bliss:
That is the gem: sell all, and purchase that.
Why go a-begging to contingencies,
Not gained with ease, nor safely loved, if gained?
At good fortuitous draw back, and pause;
Suspect it; what thou canst ensure, enjoy;
And nought, but what thou giv'st thyself, is sure.
Reason perpetuates joy that reason gives,
And makes it as immortal as herself:
To mortals, nought immortal, but their worth.
Worth, conscious Worth! should absolutely reign,
And other joys ask leave for their approach,
Nor unexamined, ever leave obtain.
Thou art all anarchy; a mob of joys
Wage war, and perish in intestine broils;
Not the least promise of internal peace!
No bosom-comfort! or unborrowed bliss!
Thy thoughts are vagabonds: all outward bound
Mid sands and rocks, and storms, to cruise for pleasure;
If gained, dear-bought; and better missed than gained.
Much pain must expiate what much pain procured.
Fancy and Sense, from an infected shore,
Thy cargo bring, and pestilence the prize,
Then such thy thirst, (insatiable thirst,
By fond indulgence but inflamed the more)
Fancy still cruises, when poor Sense is tired.
Imagination is the Paphian shop
Where feeble Happiness, like Vulcan, lame.
Bids foul ideas, in their dark recess,
And hot as hell (which kindled the black fires)
With wanton art those fatal arrows form,
Which murder all thy time, health, wealth, and fame.
Would'st thou receive them, other thoughts there are
On angel wing, descending from above;
Which these, with art divine, would counte.-work,
And form celestial armour for thy peace.
In this is seen Imagination's guilt;
But who can count her follies? she betrays thee,
To think in grandeur there is something great.
For works of curious art, and ancient fame,
Thy genius hungers, elegantly pained,
And foreign climes must cater for thy taste.
Hence, what disaster!—Though the price was paid,
That persecuting priest, the Turk of Rome,
Whose foot, (ye gods!) though cloven, must be kissed,
Detained thy dinner on the Latian shore;
(Such is the fate of honest protestants!)
And poor Magnificence is starved to death.
Hence just resentment, indignation, ire!—
Be pacified; if outward things are great,
'Tis magnanimity great things to scorn;
Pompous expenses, and parades august,
And courts that insalubrious soil to peace.
True happiness ne'er entered at an eye;
True happiness resides in things unseen.
No smiles of Fortune ever blessed the bad,
Nor can her frowns rob Innocence of joys;
That jewel wanting, triple crowns are poor:
So tell his Holiness, and be revenged.
Pleasure, we both agree, is man's chief good;
Our only contest, what deserves the name.
Give Pleasure's name to nought but what has passed
The authentic seal of Reason (which, like Yorke,
Demurs on what it passes) and defies
The tooth of Time; when past, a pleasure still;
Dearer on trial, lovelier for its age,
And doubly to be prized, as it promotes
Our future, while it forms our present joy.
Some joys the future overcast, and some
Throw all their beams that way, and gild the tomb.
Some joys endear eternity: some give
Abhorred Annihilation dreadful charms.
Are rival joys contending for thy choice?
Consult thy whole existence, and be safe;
That oracle will put all doubt to flight.

Short is the lesson, though my lecture long;
'Be good'—and let Heaven answer for the rest!
Yet, with a sigh o'er all mankind, I grant,
In this our day of proof, our land of hope,
The good man has his clouds that intervene;
Clouds that obscure his sublunary day,
But never conquer: even the best must own,
Patience and resignation are the pillars
Of human peace on earth: the pillars these,
But those of Seth not more remote from thee,
Till this heroic lesson thou hast learned,
To frown at pleasure, and to smile in pain.
Fired at the prospect of unclouded bliss,
Heaven in reversion, like the sun, as yet
Beneath the horizon, cheers us in this world;
It sheds, on souls susceptible of light,
The glorious dawn of our eternal day.'
'This (says Lorenzo) is a fair harangue!'
But can harangues blow back strong Nature's stream,
Or stem the tide Heaven pushes through our veins,
Which sweeps away man's impotent resolves,
And lays his labour level with the world?
Themselves men make their comment on mankind,
And think nought is, but what they find at home:
Thus weakness to chimera turns the truth.
Nothing romantic has the Muse prescribed.
Above,* Lorenzo saw the man of earth,
The mortal man, and wretched was the sight.
To balance that, to comfort and exalt,
Now see the man immortal: him, I mean,
Who lives as such; whose heart, full-bent on Heaven,
Leans all that way, his bias to the stars.
The world's dark shades, in contrast set, shall raise
His lustre more; though bright, without a foil:
Observe his awful portrait, and admire;
Nor stop at wonder; imitate, and live.
Some angel guide my pencil, while I draw,
What nothing less than angel can exceed,
A man on earth devoted to the skies;
Like ships in seas, while in, above the world.
With aspect mild, and elevated eye,
Behold him seated on a mount serene,
Above the fogs of sense, and passion's storm;
All the black cares and tumults of this life,
Like harmless thunders, breaking at his feet,
Excite his pity, not impair his peace.
Earth's genuine sons, the sceptered and the slave,
A mingled mob! a wandering herd! he sees,
Bewildered in the vale; in all unlike!
His full reverse in all! what higher praise?
What stronger demonstration of the right?
The present all their care, the future his.

When public welfare calls, or private want,
They give to Fame; his bounty he conceals.
Their virtues varnish Nature, his exalt.
Mankind's esteem they court, and he his own.
Theirs the wild chase of false felicities;
His, the composed possession of the true.
Alike throughout is his consistent peace,
All of one colour, and an even thread;
While party-coloured shreds of happiness,
With hideous gaps between, patch up for them
A madman's robe; each puff of Fortune blows
The tatters by, and shows their nakedness.
He sees with other eyes than theirs: where they
Behold a sun, he spies a Deity.
What makes them only smile, makes him adore.
Where they see mountains, he but atoms sees.
An empire, in his balance, weighs a grain.
They things terrestrial worship as divine;
His hopes, immortal, blow them by as dust.
That dims his sight, and shortens his survey,
Which longs, in infinite, to lose all bound.
Titles and honours (if they prove his fate)
He lays aside to find his dignity;
No dignity they find in aught besides.
They triumph in externals, (which conceal
Man's real glory) proud of an eclipse:
Himself too much he prizes to be proud,
And nothing thinks so great in man, as man.
Too dear he holds his interest to neglect
Another's welfare, or his right invade:
Their interest, like a lion, lives on prey.
They kindle at the shadow of a wrong;
Wrong he sustains with temper, looks on Heaven,
Nor stoops to think his injurer his foe:
Nought but what wounds his virtue wounds his peace.
A covered heart their character defends;
A covered heart denies him half his praise.
With nakedness his innocence agrees,
While their broad foliage testifies their fall.
Their no joys end where his full feast begins;
His joys create, theirs murder, future bliss.
To triumph in existence his alone;
And his alone triumphantly to think
His true existence is not yet begun.
His glorious course was, yesterday, complete;
Death then was welcome; yet life still is sweet.
But nothing charms Lorenzo like the firm,
Undaunted breast.—And whose is that high praise?
They yield to pleasure, though they danger brave.
And show no fortitude but in the field,
If there they show it, 'tis for glory shown;
Nor will that cordial always man their hearts.
A cordial his sustains, that can not fail:
By pleasure unsubdued, unbroke by pain,
He shares in that Omnipotence he trusts;
All-bearing, all-attempting, till he falls;
And when he falls, writes *Vici* on his shield.

* In a former Night.

From magnanimity all fear above;
From nobler recompense above applause,
Which owes to man's short outlook all its charms.
Backward to credit what he never felt,
Lorenzo cries,—'Where shines this miracle?
From what root rises this immortal man?'—
A root that grows not in Lorenzo's ground:
The root dissect, nor wonder at the flower.
He follows Nature (not like thee*) and shows us
An uninverted system of a man.
His appetite wears Reason's golden chain,
And finds, in due restraint, its luxury.
His passion, like an eagle well reclaimed,
Is taught to fly at nought but infinite.
Patient his hope, unanxious is his care,
His caution fearless, and his grief (if grief
The gods ordain) a stranger to despair.
And why?—because affection, more than meet,
His wisdom leaves not disengaged from Heaven.
Those secondary goods that smile on earth
He, loving in proportion, loves in peace.
They most the world enjoy who least admire.
His understanding 'scapes the common cloud
Of fumes arising from a boiling breast.
His head is clear, because his heart is cool,
By worldly competitions uninflamed.
The moderate movements of his soul admit
Distinct ideas, and matured debate,
An eye impartial, and an even scale;
Whence judgment sound, and unrepenting choice,
Thus in a double sense the good are wise;
On its own dunghill wiser than the world.
What, then, the world? it must be doubly weak.
Strange truth! as soon would they believe their creed.
Yet thus it is, nor otherwise can be,
So far from aught romantic what I sing;
Bliss has no being, Virtue has no strength,
But from the prospect of immortal life.
Who think Earth all, or (what weighs just the same)
Who care no farther, must prize what it yields,
Fond of its fancies, proud of its parades.
Who thinks earth nothing can't its charms admire;
He can't a foe, though most malignant, hate,
Because that hate would prove his greater foe.
'Tis hard for them (yet who so loudly boast
Good-will to men?) to love their dearest friends?
For may not he invade their good supreme,
Where the least jealousy turns love to gall?
All shines to them, that for a season shines:
Each act, each thought, he questions; 'What its weight,
Its colour what, a thousand ages hence?'——
And, what it there appears, he deems it now;
Hence pure are the recesses of his soul.
The godlike man has nothing to conceal;
His virtue, constitutionally deep,
Has Habit's firmness, and Affection's flame·
Angels, allied, descend to feed the fire,
And death, which others slay, makes him a god.
And now, Lorenzo! bigot of this world!
Wont to disdain poor bigots caught by Heaven?
Stand by thy scorn, and be reduced to nought!
For what art thou?—Thou boaster! while thy glare,
Thy gaudy grandeur, and mere worldly worth,
Like a broad mist, at distance, strikes us most,
And, like a mist, is nothing when at hand;
His merit, like a mountain, on approach,
Swells more, and rises nearer to the skies;
By promise now, and by possession, soon
('Too soon, too much, it can not be) his own.
From this thy just annihilation rise,
Lorenzo! rise to something, by reply.
The world, thy client, listens and expects,
And longs to crown thee with immortal praise.—
Can'st thou be silent? no; for wit is thine,
And Wit talks most when least she has to say,
And Reason interrupts not her career.
She'll say—that mists above the mountains rise,
And with a thousand pleasantries amuse;
She'll sparkle, puzzle, flutter, raise a dust,
And fly conviction in the dust she raised.
Wit, how delicious to man's dainty taste!
'Tis precious as the vehicle of sense,
But, as its substitute, a dire disease.
Pernicious talent! flatter'd by the world,
By the blind world, which thinks the talent rare
Wisdom is rare, Lorenzo! wit abounds;
Passion can give it; sometimes wine inspires
The lucky flash; and madness rarely fails.
Whatever cause the spirit strongly stirs,
Confers the bays, and rivals thy renown.
For thy renown 'twere well this was the worst;
Chance often hits it; and, to pique thee more,
See Dulness, blundering on vivacities,
Shakes her sage head at the calamity
Which has exposed, and let her down to thee.
But Wisdom, awful Wisdom! which inspects,
Discerns, compares, weighs, separates, infers,
Seizes the right, and holds it to the last,
How rare! in senates, synods, sought in vain:
Or if there found, 'tis sacred to the few;
While a lewd prostitute to multitudes,
Frequent, as fatal, Wit. In civil life
Wit makes an enterpriser, sense a man.
Wit hates authority, commotion loves,
And thinks herself the lightning of the storm.
In states 'tis dangerous; in religion death.
Shall Wit turn Christian when the dull believe?
Sense is our helmet, Wit is but the plume;
The plume exposes, 'tis our helmet saves.
Sense is the diamond, weighty, solid, sound;
When cut by Wit it casts a brighter beam;
Yet Wit apart, it is a diamond still.

* See Night the Eighth, p. 63.

Wit, widowed of good sense, is worse than nought;
It hoists more sail to run against a rock.
Thus a half Chesterfield is quite a fool,
Whom dull fools scorn, and bless their want of wit.
How ruinous the rock I warn thee shun,
Where Sirens sit to sing thee to thy fate!
A joy in which our reason bears no part,
Is but a sorrow tickling ere it stings.
Let not the cooings of the world allure thee;
Which of her lovers ever found her true?
Happy, of this bad world who little know:—
And yet we much must know her, to be safe.
To know the world, not love her, is thy point;
She gives but little, nor that little long.
There is, I grant, a triumph of the pulse,
A dance of spirits, a mere froth of joy,
Our thoughtless agitation's idle child,
That mantles high, that sparkles and expires,
Leaving the soul more vapid than before;
An animal ovation! such as holds
No commerce with our reason, but subsists
On juices, through the well-toned tubes well strained;
A nice machine! scarce ever tuned aright;
And when it jars—thy sirens sing no more;
Thy dance is done; the demi-god is thrown
(Short apotheosis!) beneath the man,
In coward gloom immersed, or fell despair.
Art thou yet dull enough despair to dread,
And startle at destruction? if thou art,
Accept a buckler; take it to the field;
(A field of battle is this mortal life!)
When danger threatens, lay it on thy heart,
A single sentence proof against the world.
'Soul, body, fortune; every good pertains
To one of these; but prize not all alike:
The goods of fortune to thy body's health,
Body to soul, and soul submit to God.'
Wouldst thou build lasting happiness? do this:
The inverted pyramid can never stand.
Is this truth doubtful? it outshines the sun;
Nay, the sun shines not but to show us this,
The single lesson of mankind on earth:
And yet—yet what? No news! mankind is mad;
Such mighty numbers list against the right,
(And what can't numbers, when bewitched, achieve?
They talk themselves to something like belief
That all earth's joys are theirs; as Athens' fool
Grinn'd from the port on every sail his own.
They grin, but wherefore? and how long the laugh?
Half ignorance their mirth, and half a lie.
To cheat the world, and cheat themselves, they smile:
Hard either task! the most abandoned own
That others, if abandoned, are undone:
Then for themselves, the moment Reason wakes,
(And Providence denies it long repose,)
O how laborious is their gaiety!
They scarce can swallow their ebullient spleen,
Scarce muster patience to support the force,
And pump sad laughter till the curtain falls.
Scarce did I say? some can not sit it out;
Oft their own daring hands the curtain draw,
And show us what their joy by their despair.
The clotted hair! gored breast! blaspheming eye!
Its impious fury still alive in death!
Shut, shut the shocking scene. But Heaven denies
A cover to such guilt, and so should man.
Look round, Lorenzo! see the reeking blade,
The envenomed phial, and the fatal ball;
The strangling cord, and suffocating stream;
The loathsome rottenness, and foul decays,
From raging riot, (slower suicides!)
And pride in these, more execrable still;
How horrid all to thought!—but horrors these,
That vouch the truth, and aid my feeble song.
From vice, sense, fancy, no man can be bless'd
Bliss is too great to lodge within an hour:
When an immortal being aims at bliss,
Duration is essential to the name.
O for a joy from reason; joy from that
Which makes man man, and, exercised aright,
Will make him more: a bounteous joy, that gives
And promises—that weaves, with art divine,
The richest prospect into present peace:
A joy ambitious! joy in common held
With thrones ethereal, and their greater far:
A joy high-privileged from chance, time, death!
A joy which death shall double, judgment crown!
Crowned higher, and still higher, at each stage,
Through blessed eternity's long day, yet still
Not more remote from sorrow than from him,
Whose lavish hand, whose love stupendous pours
So much of Deity on guilty dust.
There, O my Lucia! may I meet thee there,
Where not thy presence can improve my bliss.
Affects not this the sages of the world?
Can nought affect them but what fools them too?
Eternity, depending on an hour,
Makes serious thought, man's wisdom, joy, and praise.
Nor need you blush (though sometimes your designs
May shun the light) at your designs on Heaven,
Sole point! where overbashful is your blame.
Are you not wise?—you know you are: yet hear
One truth, amid your numerous schemes mislaid,
Or overlooked, or thrown aside, if seen;
'Our schemes to plan by this world or the next
Is the sole difference between wise, and fool.'
All worthy men will weigh you in this scale.
What wonder, then, if they pronounce you light?
Is their esteem alone not worth your care?
Accept my simple scheme of common sense.

Thus save your fame, and make two worlds your own.
The world replies not;—but the world persists,
And puts the cause off to the longest day,
Planning evasions for the day of doom:
So far, at that re-hearing, from redress,
They then turn witnesses against themselves.
Hear that, Lorenzo! nor be wise to-morrow.
Haste, haste! a man, by nature, is in haste!
For who shall answer for another hour?
Tis highly prudent to make one sure friend,
And that thou can'st not do, this side the skies.
Ye sons of Earth! (nor willing to be more!)
Since verse you think from priestcraft somewhat free,
Thus, in an age so gay, the Muse plain truths
(Truths which, at church, you might have heard in prose)
Has ventured into light, well pleased the verse
Should be forgot, if you the truths retain,
And crown her with your welfare, not your praise.
But praise she need not fear; I see my fate,
And headlong, leap, like Curtius, down the gulf.
Since many an ample volume, mighty tome,
Must die, and die unwept; O thou minute,
Devoted page; go forth among thy foes;
Go, nobly proud of martyrdom for truth,
And die a double death: mankind incensed,
Denies thee long to live; nor shalt thou rest
When thou art dead, in Stygian shades arraigned
By Lucifer, as traitor to his throne,
And bold blasphemer of his friend,—the World!
The world, whose legions cost him slender pay,
And volunteers around his banner swarm;
Prudent, as Prussia, in her zeal for Gaul.

'Are all, then, fools?' Lorenzo cries.—Yes, all
But such as hold this doctrine, (new to thee)
'The mother of true wisdom is the will;'
The noblest intellect, a fool without it.
World-wisdom much has done, and more may do,
In arts and sciences, in wars and peace;
But art and science, like thy wealth will leave thee,
And make thee twice a beggar at thy death.
This is the most indulgence can afford,—
Thy wisdom all can do—but make thee wise.'
Nor think this censure is severe on thee;
Satan, thy master, I dare call a dunce.

The Consolation.

——Fatis contraria fata rependens. *Virg.*

NIGHT IX, AND LAST.

CONTAINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS,—I. A MORAL SURVEY OF THE NOCTURNAL HEAVENS. II. A NIGHT-ADDRESS TO THE DEITY.

Humbly inscribed to his Grace the Duke of Newcastle.

As when a traveller, a long day past
In painful search of what he can not find,
At night's approach, content with the next cot,
There ruminates awhile his labour lost;
Then, cheers his heart with what his fate affords,
And chants his sonnet to deceive the time,
Till the due season calls him to repose;
Thus I, long-travelled in the ways of men,
And dancing with the rest the giddy maze,
Where Disappointment smiles at Hope's career,
Warned by the languor of life's evening ray,
At length have housed me in an humble shed,
Where, future wandering banished from my thought,
And waiting, patient, the sweet hour of rest,
I chase the moments with a serious song.
Song soothes our pains, and age has pains to soothe.
When age, care, crime, and friends embraced at heart.
Torn from my bleeding breast, and death's dark shade,
Which hover's o'er me, quench the etherial fire,
Canst thou, O Night! indulge one labour more?
One labour more indulge! then sleep, my strain!
Till, haply, waked by Raphael's golden lyre,
Where night, death, age, crime, care, and sorrow cease,
To bear a part in everlasting lays;
Though far, far higher set; in aim, I trust,
Symphonious to this humble prelude here.
Has not the muse asserted pleasures pure,
Like those above, exploding other joys?
Weigh what was urged Lorenzo; fairly weigh,
And tell me, hast thou cause to triumph still?
I think thou wilt forbear a boast so bold;
But if, beneath the favour of mistake,
Thy smile's sincere; not more sincere can be
Lorenzo's smile, than my compassion for him.
The sick in body call for aid; the sick
In mind are covetous of more disease;
And, when at worst, they dream themselves quite well.
To know ourselves diseased, is half our cure.
When Nature's blush by custom is wiped off,
And conscience deadened by repeated strokes,

Has into manners naturalized our crimes,
The curse of curses is, our curse to love;
To triumph in the blackness of our guilt,
(As Indians glory in the deepest jet)
And throw aside our senses with our peace.
But, grant no guilt, no shame, no least alloy;
Grant joy and glory quite unsullied shone;
Yet, still, it ill deserves Lorenzo's heart.
No joy, no glory, glitters in thy sight,
But, through the thin partition of an hour,
I see its sables wove by Destiny;
And that in sorrow buried, this in shame,
While howling furies wring the doleful knell,
And Conscience, now so soft thou scarce canst hear
Her whisper, echoes her eternal peal.
Where the prime actors of the last year's scene:
Their port so proud, their buskin, and their plume?
How many sleep, who kept the world awake
With lustre and with noise! Has Death proclaimed
A truce, and hung his sated lance on high?
'Tis brandished still, nor shall the present year
Be more tenacious of her human leaf,
Or spread, of feeble life, a thinner fall.
But needless monuments to wake the thought:
Life's gayest scenes speak man's mortality,
Though in a style more florid, full as plain
As mausoleums, pyramids, and tombs.
What are our noblest ornaments, but Deaths
Turned flatterers of Life, in paint or marble,
The well-stained canvass, or the featured stone?
Our fathers grace, or rather haunt, the scene:
Joy peoples her pavilion from the dead.
'Professed diversions! can not these escape?—
Far from it: these present us with a shroud,
And talk of death, like garlands o'er a grave.
As some bold plunderers for buried wealth,
We ransack tombs for pastime; from the dust
Call up the sleeping hero; bid him tread
The scene for our amusement. How like gods
We sit, and, wrapt in immortality,
Shed generous tears on wretches born to die;
Their fate deploring, to forget our own!
What all the pomps and triumphs of our lives
But legacies in blossom? Our lean soil,
Luxuriant grown, and rank in vanities,
From friends interred beneath, a rich manure!
Like other worms, we banquet on the dead;
Like other worms, shall we crawl on, nor know
Our present frailties, or approaching fate?
Lorenzo! such the glories of the world!
What is the world itself? thy world—a grave.
Where is the dust that has not been alive?
The spade, the plough, disturb our ancestors.
From human mould we reap our daily bread.
The globe around earth's hollow surface shakes,
And is the ceiling of her sleeping sons.
O'er devastation we blind revels keep:
Whole buried towns support the dancer's heel.
The moist of human frame the sun exhales;
Winds scatter, through the mighty void, the dry:
Earth repossesses part of what she gave,
And the freed spirit mounts on wings of fire:
Each element partakes our scattered spoils,
As Nature wide our ruins spread. Man's death
Inhabits all things, but the thought of man.
Nor man alone; his breathing bust expires;
His tomb is mortal; empires die: where, now,
The Roman? Greek? they stalk, an empty name!
Yet few regard them in this useful light,
Though half our learning is their epitaph.
When down thy vale, unlocked by midnight thought,
That loves to wander in thy sunless realms,
O Death! I stretch my view, what visions rise
What triumphs! toils imperial! arts divine!
In withered laurels glide before my sight!
What lengths of far-famed ages, billowed high
With human agitation, roll along
In unsubstantial images of air!
The melancholy ghosts of dead Renown,
Whispering faint echoes of the world's applause,
With penitential aspect, as they pass,
All point at earth, and hiss at human pride;
The wisdom of the wise, and prancings of the great.
But, O Lorenzo! far the rest above,
Of ghastly nature, and enormous size,
One form assaults my sight, and chills my blood,
And shakes my frame. Of one departed World
I see the mighty shadow: oozy wreath
And dismal sea-weed crown her: o'er her urn
Reclined, she weeps her desolated realms,
And bloated sons; and, weeping, prophesies
Another's dissolution, soon, in flames:
But, like Cassandra, prophesies in vain:
In vain to many; not, I trust, to thee.
For, know'st thou not, or art thou loth to know,
The great decree, the counsel of the Skies?
Deluge and Conflagration, dreadful powers!
Prime ministers of vengeance! chained in caves
Distinct, apart, the giant furies roar;
Apart, or such their horrid rage for ruin,
In mutual conflict would they rise, and wage
Eternal war, till one was quite devoured.
But not for this ordained their boundless rage.
When Heaven's inferior instruments of wrath,
War, famine, pestilence, are found too weak
To scourge a world for her enormous crimes,
These are let loose alternate: down they rush.
Swift and tempestuous, from the eternal throne,
With irresistible commission armed,
The world, in vain corrected, to destroy;
And ease Creation of the shocking scene
Seest thou, Lorenzo! what depends on man?
The fate of Nature, as for man her birth.
Earth's actors change earth's transitory scenes,
And make Creation groan with human guilt.
How must it groan, in a new deluge whelmed,
But not of waters! At the destined hour,

By the loud trumpet summoned to the charge,
See all the formidable sons of fire,
Eruptions, earthquakes, comets, lightnings, play
Their various engines; all at once disgorge
Their blazing magazines, and take, by storm,
This poor terrestrial citadel of man.
Amazing period! when each mountain-height
Outburns Vesuvius; rocks eternal pour
Their melted mass, as rivers once they poured;
Stars rush, and final Ruin fiercely drives
Her ploughshare o'er Creation!—while aloft,
More than astonishment! if more can be!
Far other firmament than e'er was seen,
Than e'er was thought by man! far other stars!
Stars animate, that govern these of fire;
Far other sun!—a Sun, O how unlike
The Babe at Bethlehem! how unlike the Man
That groaned on Calvary!—yet He it is;
That Man of sorrows! O how changed! what pomp!
In grandeur terrible all Heaven descends!
And gods, ambitious, triumph in his train.
A swift archangel, with his golden wing,
As blots and clouds that darken and disgrace
The scene divine, sweeps stars and suns aside.
And now, all dross removed, Heaven's own pure day,
Full on the confines of our ether flames,
While (dreadful contrast!) far, how far beneath!
Hell, bursting, belches forth her blazing seas
And storms sulphureous; her voracious jaws
Expanding wide, and roaring for her prey.
Lorenzo! welcome to this scene: the last
In Nature's course, the first in Wisdom's thought.
This strikes; if aught can strike thee; this awakes
The most supine; this snatches man from death.
Rouse, rouse, Lorenzo! then, and follow me,
Where truth, the most momentous man can hear,
Loud calls my soul, and ardour wings her flight.
I find my inspiration in my theme:
The grandeur of my subject is my Muse.
At midnight, when mankind is wrapt in peace,
And worldly Fancy feeds on golden dreams,
To give more dread to man's most dreadful hour;
At midnight, 'tis presumed, this pomp will burst
From tenfold darkness, sudden as the spark
From smitten steel; from nitrous grain the blaze.
Man, starting from his couch, shall sleep no more!
The day is broke, which never more shall close!
Above, around, beneath, amazement all!
Terror and glory joined in their extremes!
Our God in grandeur, and our world on fire!
All Nature struggling in the pangs of death!
Dost thou not hear her? dost thou not deplore
Her strong convulsions, and her final groan?
Where are we now? Ah me! the ground is gone
On which we stood. Lorenzo! while thou may'st,
Provide more firm support, or sink for ever!
Where? how? from whence? Vain hope! it is too late!
Where, where, for shelter, shall the guilty fly,
When consternation turns the good man pale?
Great day! for which all other days were made;
For which earth rose from chaos, man from earth
And an eternity, the date of gods,
Descended on poor earth-created man!
Great day of dread, decision, and despair!
At thought of thee each sublunary wish
Lets go its eager grasp, and drops the world,
And catches at each reed of hope in Heaven.
At thought of thee! and art thou absent then?
Lorenzo! no; 'tis here;—it is begun:—
Already is begun the grand assize,
In thee, in all: deputed Conscience scales
The dread tribunal, and forestalls our doom;
Forestalls, and, by forestalling, proves it sure.
Why on himself should man void judgment pass?
Is idle Nature laughing at her sons?
Who Conscience sent, her sentence will support,
And God above assert that God in man.
Thrice happy they! that enter now the court
Heaven opens in their bosoms: but how rare,
Ah me! that magnanimity, how rare!
What hero, like the man who stands himself;
Who dares to meet his naked heart alone;
Who hears, intrepid, the full charge it brings.
Resolved to silence future murmurs there?
The coward flies, and, flying, is undone.
(Art thou a coward? no:) the coward flies;
Thinks, but thinks slightly; asks, but fears to know:
Asks 'What is truth?' with Pilate, and retires
Dissolves the court, and mingles with the throng:
Asylum sad from reason, hope, and Heaven!
Shall all but man look out with ardent eye
For that great day which was ordained for man?
O day of consummation! mark supreme
(If men are wise) of human thought! nor least
Or in the sight of angels, or their King!
Angels, whose radiant circles, height o'er height,
Order o'er order, rising, blaze o'er blaze,
As in a theatre, surround this scene,
Intent on man, and anxious for his fate.
Angels look out for thee; for thee, their Lord,
To vindicate his glory; and for thee
Creation universal calls aloud
To disinvolve the moral world, and give
To Nature's renovation brighter charms.
Shall man alone, whose fate, whose final fate,
Hangs on that hour, exclude it from his thought?
I think of nothing else; I see! I feel it!
All Nature, like an earthquake, trembling round!
All deities, like summer's swarms, on wing!
All basking in the full meridian blaze!
I see the judge enthroned! the flaming guard!
The volume opened! opened every heart!
A sun-beam pointing out each secret thought!
No patron! intercessor none! now past
The sweet, the clement, mediatorial hour!

For guilt no plea! to pain no pause! no bound!
Inexorable all! and all extreme!
Nor man alone; the foe of God and man,
From his dark den, blaspheming, drags his chain,
And rears his brazen front, with thunder scared,
Receives his sentence, and begins his hell.
All vengeance past, now, seems abundant grace.
Like meteors in a stormy sky, how roll
His baleful eyes! he curses whom he dreads,
And deems it the first moment of his fall.
'Tis present to my thought!—and yet where is it?
Angels can't tell me; angels can not guess
The period, from created beings locked
In darkness; but the process and the place
Are less obscure; for these may man inquire.
Say, thou great close of human hopes and fears!
Great key of hearts! great finisher of fates!
Great end! and great beginning! say, where art thou?
Art thou in time, or in eternity?
Nor in eternity nor time I find thee:
These, as two monarchs, on their borders meet,
(Monarchs of all elapsed or unarrived!)
As in debate, how best their powers allied
May swell the grandeur, or discharge the wrath
Of him, whom both their monarchies obey.
Time, this vast fabric for him built (and doomed
With him to fall) now bursting o'er his head,
His lamp, the sun, extinguished, from beneath
The frown of hideous darkness calls his sons
From their long slumber, from earth's heaving womb
To second birth! contemporary throng!
Roused at one call, upstarted from one bed,
Pressed in one crowd, appalled with one amaze,
He turns them o'er, Eternity! to thee:
Then (as a king deposed disdains to live)
He falls on his own scythe, nor falls alone;
His greatest foe falls with him; Time, and he
Who murdered all Time's offspring, Death, expire.
Time was! Eternity now reigns alone!
Awful Eternity! offended queen!
And her resentment to mankind how just!
With kind intent, soliciting access,
How often has she knocked at human hearts!
Rich to repay their hospitality,
How often called! and with the voice of God!
Yet bore repulse, excluded as a cheat!
A dream! while foulest foes found welcome there!
A dream, a cheat, now all things but her smile.
For, lo! her twice ten thousand gates thrown wide,
As thrice from Indus to the frozen pole,
With banners streaming as the comet's blaze,
And clarions louder than the deep in storms,
Sonorous as immortal breath can blow,
Pour forth their myriads, potentates, and powers,
Of light, of darkness, in a middle field,
Wide as creation! populous as wide!
A neutral region! there to mark the event
Of that great drama, whose preceding scenes
Detained them close spectators, through a length
Of ages, ripening to this grand result;
Ages as yet unnumbered but by God,
Who now, pronouncing sentence, vindicates
The rights of virtue, and his own renown.
Eternity, the various sentence past,
Assigns the severed throng distinct abodes,
Sulphureous or ambrosial. What ensues?
The deed predominant! the deed of deeds!
Which makes a hell of hell, a heaven of Heaven.
The goddess, with determined aspect, turns
Her adamantine key's enormous size
Through Destiny's inextricable wards,
Deep driving every bolt on both their fates;
Then from the crystal battlements of Heaven,
Down, down she hurls it through the dark profound,
Ten thousand thousand fathom, there to rust,
And never unlock her resolution more.
The deep resounds, and Hell, through all her glooms,
Returns, in groans, the melancholy roar.
O how unlike the chorus of the skies!
O how unlike those shouts of joy, that shake
The whole ethereal! how the concave rings!
Nor strange! when deities their voice exalt;
And louder far than when Creation rose,
To see Creation's godlike aim and end,
So well accomplished! so divinely closed!
To see the mighty Dramatist's last act
(As meet) in glory rising o'er the rest.
No fancied God; a God, indeed, descends,
To solve all knots; to strike the moral home;
To throw full day on darkest scenes of time;
To clear, commend, exalt, and crown the whole.
Hence, in one peal of loud, eternal praise,
The charmed spectators thunder their applause,
And the vast void beyond applause resounds.
What then am I?—
Amidst applauding worlds,
And worlds celestial, is there found on earth
A peevish, dissonant, rebellious string,
Which jars in the grand chorus, and complains?
Censure on thee, Lorenzo! I suspend,
And turn it on myself; how greatly due!
All, all is right, by God ordained or done;
And who, but God, resumed the friends He gave?
And have I been complaining, then, so long?
Complaining of his favours, pain and death?
Who, without Pain's advice, would e'er be good?
Who, without Death, but would be good in vain?
Pain is to save from pain; all punishment
To make for peace; and death to save from death:
And second death to guard immortal life;
To rouse the careless, the presumptuous awe
And turn the tide of souls another way;

By the same tenderness divine ordained
That planted Eden, and high-bloomed for man
A fairer Eden, endless in the skies.
Heaven gives us friends to bless the present scene;
Resumes them, to prepare us for the next.
All evils natural are moral goods;
All discipline indulgence, on the whole.
None are unhappy; all have cause to smile,
But such as to themselves that cause deny.
Our faults are at the bottom of our pains:
Error in act, or judgment, is the source
Of endless sighs. We sin, or we mistake;
And Nature tax, when false opinion stings.
Let impious grief be banished, joy indulged;
But chiefly then, when Grief puts in her claim.
Joy from the joyous frequently betrays,
Oft lives in vanity, and dies in wo.
Joy amidst ills, corroborates, exalts;
'Tis joy and conquest; joy and virtue too.
A noble fortitude in ills delights
Heaven, earth, ourselves; 'tis duty, glory, peace!
Affliction is the good man's shining scene,
Prosperity conceals his brightest ray.
As night to stars, wo lustre gives to man.
Heroes in battle, pilots in the storm,
And virtue in calamities, admire.
The crown of manhood is a winter-joy;
An ever-green that stands the northern blast,
And blossoms in the rigour of our fate.
'Tis a prime part of happiness to know
How much unhappiness must prove our lot;
A part which few possess! I'll pay life's tax,
Without one rebel murmur, from this hour,
Nor think it misery to be a man;
Who thinks it is, shall never be a god.
Some ills we wish for, when we wish to live.
What spoke proud Passion?—'Wish my being lost?'*
Presumptuous! blasphemous! absurd! and false!
The triumph of my soul is,—that I am;
And therefore that I may be—what? Lorenzo!
Look inward, and look deep; and deeper still;
Unfathomably deep our treasure runs,
In golden veins, through all eternity!
Ages, and ages, and succeeding still
New ages, where this phantom of an hour,
Which courts, each night, dull slumber for repair,
Shall wake, and wonder, and exult, and praise,
And fly through infinite, and all unlock;
And (if deserved) by Heaven's redundant love,
Made half-adorable itself, adore;
And find, in adoration, endless joy!
Where thou, not master of a moment here,
Frail as the flower, and fleeting as the gale,
May'st boast a whole eternity, enriched
With all a kind Omnipotence can pour.

* Referring to the First Night.

Since Adam fell, no mortal uninspired,
Has ever yet conceived, or ever shall,
How kind is God, how great (if good) is man.
No man too largely from Heaven's love can hope,
If what is hoped he labours to secure.
Ills!—there are none: All-gracious! none from Thee;
From man full many! Numerous is the race
Of blackest ills, and those immortal too,
Begot by Madness on fair Liberty,
Heaven's daughter, hell-debauched! her hand alone
Unlocks destruction to the sons of men,
Fast barred by thine: high-walled with adamant,
Guarded with terrors reaching to this world
And covered with the thunders of thy law,
Whose threats are mercies, whose injunctions guides,
Assisting, not restraining, Reason's choice;
Whose sanctions, unavoidable results
From Nature's course, indulgently revealed;
If unrevealed, more dangerous, nor less sure.
Thus an indulgent father warns his sons,
'Do this, fly that;'—nor always tells the cause;
Pleased to reward, as duty to his will,
A conduct needful to their own repose.
Great God of wonders! (if, thy love surveyed,
Aught else the name of wonderful retains)
What rocks are these on which to build our trust?
Thy ways admit no blemish; none I find;
Or this alone,—'That none is to be found:
Not one, to soften Censure's hardy crime;
Not one, to palliate peevish Grief's complaint,
Who, like a demon, murmuring from the dust,
Dares into judgment call her judge.—Supreme!
For all I bless Thee; most for the severe;
Her death*—my own at hand—the fiery gulf,
That flaming bound of wrath omnipotent!
It thunders;—but it thunders to preserve;
It strengthens what it strikes; its wholesome dread
Averts the dreaded pain: its hideous groans
Join heaven's sweet hallelujahs in thy praise.
Great Source of good alone! how kind in all!
In vengeance kind! pain, death, gehenna, save!
Thus, in thy world material, mighty Mind!
Not that alone which solaces and shines,
The rough and gloomy, challenges our praise.
The winter is as needful as the spring;
The thunder as the sun. A stagnate mass
Of vapours breeds a pestilential air:
Nor more propitious the Favonian breeze
To Nature's health, than purifying storms.
The dread volcano ministers to good;
Its smothered flames might undermine the world.
Loud Ætnas fulminate in love to man:
Comets good omens are, when duly scanned:
And, in their use, eclipses learn to shine.
Man is responsible for ills received;

* Lucia.

Those we call wretched are a chosen band,
Compelled to refuge in the right, for peace.
Amid my list of blessings infinite
Stand this the foremost, ' That my heart has bled.'
'Tis Heaven's last effort of good-will to man.
When pain can't bless, Heaven quits us in despair!
Who fails to grieve, when just occasion calls,
Or grieves too much, deserves not to be blessed;
Inhuman, or effeminate, his heart.
Reason absolves the grief which reason ends.
May Heaven ne'er trust my friend with happiness,
Till it has taught him how to bear it well
By previous pain, and made it safe to smile!
Such smiles are mine, and such may they remain,
Nor hazard their extinction from excess.
My change of heart a change of style demands;
The Consolation cancels the Complaint,
And makes a convert of my guilty song.
As when o'er-laboured, and inclined to breathe,
A panting traveller some rising ground,
Some small ascent, has gained, he turns him round,
And measures with his eye the various vale,
The fields, woods, meads, and rivers, he has past,
And, satiate of his journey, thinks of home,
Endeared by distance, nor affects more toil;
Thus I, though small, indeed, is that ascent
The muse has gained, review the paths she trod,
Various, extensive, beaten but by few;
And, conscious of her prudence in repose,
Pause, and with pleasure meditate an end,
Though still remote; so fruitful is my theme.
Through many a field of moral and divine
The Muse has strayed, and much of sorrow seen
In human ways, and much of false and vain,
Which none who travel this bad road can miss.
O'er friends deceased full heartily she wept;
Of love divine the wonders she displayed;
Proved man immortal; showed the source of joy;
The grand tribunal raised; assigned the bounds
Of human grief. In few, to close the whole,
The moral Muse has shadowed out a sketch,
Though not in form, nor with a Raphael stroke,
Of most our weakness needs believe or do,
In this our land of travail and of hope,
For peace on earth, or prospect of the skies.
What then remains? much! much! a mighty debt
To be discharged. These thoughts, O Night! are thine;
From thee they came, like lovers' secret sighs,
While others slept. So Cynthia, (poets feign)
In shadows veiled, soft-sliding from her sphere,
Her shepherd cheered; of her enamoured less
Than I of thee.—And art thou still unsung,
Beneath whose brow, and by whose aid, I sing?
Immortal Silence! where shall I begin?
Where end? or how steal music from the spheres
To sooth their goddess?
O majestic Night!
Nature's great ancestor! Day's elder-born!
And fated to survive the transient Sun!
By mortals and immortals seen with awe!
A starry crown thy raven brow adorns,
An azure zone thy waist; clouds, in heaven's loom
Wrought through varieties of shape and shade,
In ample folds of drapery divine,
Thy flowing mantle form, and, Heaven throughout,
Voluminously pour thy pompous train:
Thy gloomy grandeurs (Nature's most august,
Inspiring aspect!) claim a grateful verse;
And, like a sable curtain starred with gold,
Drawn o'er my labours past, shall close the scene.
And what, O man! so worthy to be sung?
What more prepares us for the songs of Heaven?
Creation of archangels is the theme!
What to be sung so needful, what so well
Celestial joys prepare us to sustain?
The soul of man, His face designed to see
Who gave these wonders to be seen by man,
Has here a previous scene of objects great
On which to dwell; to stretch to that expanse
Of thought, to rise to that exalted height
Of admiration, to contract that awe,
And give her whole capacities that strength,
Which best may qualify for final joy.
The more our spirits are enlarged on earth,
The deeper draught shall they receive of Heaven.
Heaven's King! whose face unveiled consummates bliss.
Redundant bliss! which fills that mighty void
The whole Creation leaves in human hearts!
Thou, who did'st touch the lip of Jesse's son,
Rapt in sweet contemplation of these fires,
And set his harp in concert with the spheres.
While of thy works material the Supreme
I dare attempt, assist my daring song:
Loose me from earth's inclosure; from the sun's
Contracted circle set my heart at large;
Eliminate my spirit, give it range
Through provinces of thought yet unexplored;
Teach me, by this stupendous scaffolding,
Creation's golden steps, to climb to Thee:
Teach me with art great Nature to control,
And spread a lustre o'er the shades of night.
Feel I thy kind assent? and shall the sun
Be seen at midnight, rising in my song?
Lorenzo! come, and warm thee: thou, whose heart,
Whose little heart, is moored within a nook
Of this obscure terrestrial, anchor weigh;
Another ocean calls, a nobler port;
I am thy pilot, I thy prosperous gale:
Gainful thy voyage through yon azure main,
Main without tempest, pirate, rock, or shore,
And whence thou may'st import eternal wealth,
And leave to beggared minds the pearl and gold
Thy travels dost thou boast o'er foreign realms?
Thou stranger to the world! thy tour begin;
Thy tour through Nature's universal orb.

Nature delineates her whole chart at large,
On soaring souls, that sail among the spheres;
And man how purblind, if unknown the whole.
Who circles spacious earth, then travels here,
Shall own he never was from home before.
Come, my Prometheus!* from thy pointed rock
Of false ambition, if unchained, we'll mount;
We'll, innocently, steal celestial fire,
And kindle our devotion at the stars;
A theft that shall not chain, but set thee free.
Above our atmosphere's intestine wars,
Rain's fountain-head, the magazine of hail;
Above the northern nests of feathered snows,
The brew of thunders, and the flaming forge
That forms the crooked lightning; 'bove the caves
Where infant tempests wait their growing wings,
And tune their tender voices to that roar
Which soon, perhaps, shall shake a guilty world;
Above misconstrued omens of the sky,
Far-travelled comets' calculated blaze,
Elance thy thought, and think of more than man:
Thy soul, till now contracted, withered, shrunk,
Blighted by blasts of earth's unwholesome air,
Will blossom here; spread all her faculties
To these bright ardours; every power unfold,
And rise into sublimities of thought.
Stars teach, as well as shine. At Nature's birth
Thus their commission ran.—'Be kind to man.'
Where art thou, poor benighted traveller!
The stars will light thee, though the moon should fail.
Where art thou, more benighted! more astray!
In ways immoral? the stars call thee back,
And, if obeyed their counsel, set thee right.
This prospect vast, what is it?—Weighed aright
'Tis Nature's system of divinity,
And every student of the night inspires.
'Tis elder Scripture, writ by God's own hand;
Scripture authentic! uncorrupt by man.
Lorenzo! with my radius (the rich gift
Of thought nocturnal) I'll point out to thee
Its various lessons; some that may surprise
An unadept in mysteries of Night;
Little, perhaps, expected in her school,
Nor thought to grow on planet or on star;
Bulls, lions, scorpions, monsters here we feign,
Ourselves more monstrous, not to see what here
Exists, indeed,—a lecture to mankind!
What read we here? th' existence of a God?
Yes: and of other beings, man above;
Natives of ether! sons of higher climes!
And, what may move Lorenzo's wonder more,
Eternity is written in the skies.
And whose eternity? Lorenzo! thine;
Mankind's eternity. Nor faith alone,
Virtue grows here; here springs the sovereign cure
Of almost every vice, but chiefly thine,
Wrath, pride, ambition, and impure desire.
Lorenzo! thou canst wake at midnight too,
Though not on morals bent. Ambition, Pleasure!
Those tyrants I for thee so lately fought,*
Afford their harassed slaves but slender rest.
Thou, to whom midnight is immoral noon,
And the sun's noon-tide blaze prime dawn of day.
Not by thy climate, but capricious crime,
Commencing one of our antipodes!
In thy nocturnal rove one moment halt,
'Twixt stage and stage of riot and cabal,
And lift thine eye (if bold an eye to lift,
If bold to meet the face of injured Heaven)
To yonder stars: for other ends they shine
Than to light revellers from shame to shame,
And thus be made accomplices in guilt.
Why from yon arch, that infinite of space,
With infinite of lucid orbs replete,
Which set the living firmament on fire,
At the first glance, in such an overwhelm
Of wonderful on man's astonished sight
Rushes Omnipotence?—To curb our pride,
Our reason rouse, and lead it to that Power
Whose love lets down these silver chains of light;
To draw up man's ambition to himself,
And bind our chaste affections to his throne.
Thus the three virtues, least alive on earth,
And welcomed on Heaven's coast with most applause,
An humble, pure, and heavenly minded heart,
Are here inspired;—and canst thou gaze too long?
Nor stands thy wrath deprived of its reproof,
Or unupbraided by this radiant choir.
The planets of each system represent
Kind neighbours; mutual amity prevails
Sweet interchange of rays, received, returned,
Enlightening and enlightened! all, at once,
Attracting and attracted! patriot-like,
None sins against the welfare of the whole;
But their reciprocal, unselfish aid,
Affords an emblem of millenial love.
Nothing in nature, much less conscious being,
Was e'er created solely for itself.
Thus man his sovereign duty learns in this
Material picture of benevolence.
And know, of all our supercilious race.
Thou most inflammable! thou wasp of men!
Man's angry heart, inspected, would be found
As rightly set as are the starry spheres:
'Tis Nature's structure, broke by stubborn Will,
Breeds all that uncelestial discord there.
Wilt thou not feel the bias Nature gave?
Canst thou descend from converse with the skies,
And seize thy brother's throat?—For what?—a clod?
An inch of earth? The planets cry 'Forbear.'

* See Night the Eighth, p. 252.

* In Night the Eighth.

They chase our double darkness, Nature's gloom,
And, (kinder still,) our intellectual night.
And see, Day's amiable Sister sends
Her invitation, in the softest rays
Of mitigated lustre; courts thy sight
Which suffers from her tyrant brother's blaze.
Night grants thee the full freedom of the skies,
Nor rudely reprimands thy lifted eye;
With gain and joy she bribes thee to be wise.
Night opes the noblest scenes, and sheds an awe
Which gives those venerable scenes full weight,
And deep reception in the entendered heart;
While light peeps through the darkness like a spy,
And darkness shows its grandeur by the light.
Nor is the profit greater than the joy,
If human hearts at glorious objects glow,
And admiration can inspire delight.
What speak I more, than I this moment feel?
With pleasing stupor first the soul is struck,
(Stupor ordained to make her truly wise;)
Then into transport starting from her trance,
With love and admiration how she glows;
This gorgeous apparatus—this display—
This ostentation of creative power!
This theatre!—what eye can take it in?
By what divine enchantment was it raised,
For minds of the first magnitude to launch
In endless speculation and adore?
One sun by day, by night ten thousand shine,
And light us deep into the Deity;
How boundless in magnificence and might!
O what a confluence of ethereal fires,
From urns unnumbered, down the steep of heaven,
Streams to a point, and centres in my sight:
Nor tarries there; I feel it at my heart:
My heart, at once, it humbles and exalts;
Lays it in dust, and calls it to the skies.
Who sees it unexalted, or unawed?
Who sees it, and can stop at what is seen?
Material offspring of omnipotence!
Inanimate, all-animating birth!
Work worthy him who made it; worthy praise—
All praise; praise more than human; nor denied
Thy praise divine. But though man, drowned in sleep,
Withholds his homage, not alone I wake;
Bright legions swarm unseen, and sing unheard
By mortal ear, the glorious Architect,
In this his universal temple, hung
With lustres, with innumerable lights,
That shed religion on the soul; at once
The temple and the preacher. O how loud
It calls devotion;—genuine growth of Night!
Devotion! daughter of Astronomy!
An undevout astronomer is mad.
True; all things speak a God: but in the small,
Men trace out Him; in great, He seizes man;
Seizes, and elevates, and wraps, and fills
With new enquiries, mid associates new.
Tell me, ye stars, ye planets; tell me, all
Ye starred and planeted inhabitants,—what is it?
What are these sons of wonder? Say, proud Arch,
(Within whose azure palaces they dwell)
Built with divine ambition; in disdain
Of limit, built; built in the taste of Heaven!
Vast concave—ample dome! wast thou designed
A meet apartment for the Deity?
Not so; that thought alone thy state impairs,
Thy lofty sinks, and shallows thy profound,
And strengthens thy diffusive; dwarfs the whole,
And makes an Universe and Orrery.
But when I drop mine eye, and look on man,
Thy right regained, thy grandeur is restored,
O Nature! wide flies off the expanding round:
As when whole magazines, at once, are fired,
The smitten air is hollowed by the blow,
The vast displosion dissipates the clouds,
Shocked ether's billows dash the distant skies;
Thus (but far more) the expanding round flies off,
And leaves a mighty void, a spacious womb,
Might teem with new creation; reinflamed,
Thy luminaries triumph, and assume
Divinity themselves. Nor was it strange.
Matter, high wrought to such surprising pomp,
Such godlike glory, stole the style of gods,
From ages dark, obtuse, and steeped in sense:
For sure to sense they truly are divine,
And half absolved idolatry from guilt,
Nay, turned it into virtue. Such it was
In those, who put forth all they had of man
Unlost, to lift their thought, nor mounted higher;
But, weak of wing, on planets perched, and thought
What was their highest must be their adored.
But they how weak, who could no higher mount?
And are there, then, Lorenzo, those to whom
Unseen, and unexistent, are the same?
And if incomprehensible is joined,
Who dare pronounce it madness to believe?
Why has the mighty Builder thrown aside
All measure in his work? stretched out his line
So far, and spread amazement o'er the whole?
Then (as he took delight in wide extremes)
Deep in the bosom of his Universe
Dropped down that reasoning mite, that insect, man!
To crawl, and gaze, and wonder at the scene?—
That man might ne'er presume to plead amazement
For disbelief of wonders in himself.
Shall God be less miraculous, than what
His hand has form'd? shall mysteries descend
From unmysterious? things more elevate,
Be more familiar? uncreated lie
More obvious than created, to the grasp
Of human thought? The more of wonderful
Is heard in Him, the more we should assent.
Could we conceive him, God he could not be,
Or he not God or we could not be men

A God alone can comprehend a God:
Man's distance how immense! On such a theme,
Know this, Lorenzo! (seem it ne'er so strange)
Nothing can satisfy but what confounds;
Nothing but what astonishes, is true.
The scene thou seest attests the truth I sing,
And every star sheds light upon thy creed.
These stars, this furniture, this cost of Heaven,
If but reported, thou hadst ne'er believed;
But thine eye tells thee the romance is true.
The grand of Nature is the Almighty's oath
In Reason's court, to silence Unbelief.
How my mind, opening at this scene, imbibes
The moral emanations of the skies,
While nought, perhaps, Lorenzo less admires!
Has the Great Sovereign sent ten thousand worlds
To tell us, He resides above them all,
In glory's unapproachable recess?
And dare earth's bold inhabitants deny
The sumptuous, the magnific embassy,
A moment's audience? Turn we, nor will hear
From whom they come, or what they would impart
For man's emolument; sole cause that stoops
Their grandeur to man's eye? Lorenzo! rouse;
Let thought, awakened, take the lightning's wing,
And glance from east to west, from pole to pole.
Who sees, but is confounded, or convinced?
Renounces reason, or a God adores?
Mankind was sent into the world to see:
Sight gives the science needful to their peace;
That obvious science asks small learning's aid.
Wouldst thou on metaphysic pinions soar?
Or wound thy patience amid logic thorns?
Or travel history's enormous round?
Nature no such hard task enjoins: she gave
A make to man directive of his thought;
A make set upright, pointing to the stars,
As who shall say, 'Read thy chief lesson there.'
Too late to read this manuscript of Heaven,
When, like a parchment-scroll, shrunk up by flames,
It folds Lorenzo's lesson from his sight.
Lesson how various! not the God alone,
I see his ministers; I see, diffused
In radiant orders, essences sublime,
Of various offices, of various plume,
In heavenly liveries distinctly clad,
Azure, green, purple, pearl, or downy gold,
Or all commixed; they stand, with wings outspread,
Listening to catch the Master's least command,
And fly through nature ere the moment ends;
Numbers innumerable!— Well conceived
By Pagan and by Christian! O'er each sphere
Presides an angel, to direct its course,
And feed, or fan, its flames; or to discharge
Other high trusts unknown; for who can see
Such pomp of matter, and imagine mind
(For which alone inanimate was made)
More sparingly dispensed? that nobler son,
Far liker the great Sire!—'Tis thus the skies
Inform us of superiors numberless,
As much, in excellence, above mankind,
As above earth, in magnitude, the spheres.
These, as a cloud of witnesses, hang o'er us:
In a thronged theatre all our deeds.
Perhaps a thousand demigods descend
On every beam we see, to walk with men.
Awful reflection! strong restraint from ill!
Yet here, our virtue finds still stronger aid
From these ethereal glories sense surveys.
Something, like magic, strikes from this blue vault:
With just attention is it viewed? we feel
A sudden succour, unimplored, unthought.
Nature herself does half the work of man.
Seas, rivers, mountains, forests, deserts, rocks,
The promontory's height, the depth profound
Of subterranean excavated grots,
Black-browed, and vaulted high, and yawning wide,
From Nature's structure, or the scoop of Time;
If ample of dimension, vast of size,
E'en these an aggrandizing impulse give;
Of solemn thought enthusiastic heights
Ev'n these infuse.—But what of vast in these?
Nothing—or we must own the skies forgot.
Much less in art.—Vain Art! thou pigmy power!
How dost thou swell, and strut, with human pride,
To show thy littleness! What childish toys,
Thy watry columns squirted to the clouds!
Thy basined rivers and imprisoned seas!
Thy mountains moulded into forms of men!
Thy hundred-gated capitals! or those
Where three days' travel left us much to ride;
Gazing on miracles by mortals wrought,
Arches triumphal, theatres immense,
Or nodding gardens pendent in mid air!
Or temples proud to meet their gods half-way!
Yet these affect us in no common kind:
What then the force of such superior scenes?
Enter a temple, it will strike an awe:
What awe from this the Deity has built?
A good man seen, though silent, counsel gives:
The touched spectator wishes to be wise.
In a bright mirror His own hands have made,
Here we see something like the face of God.
Seems it not then enough to say, Lorenzo,
To man abandoned, 'Hast thou seen the skies?'
And yet, so thwarted Nature's kind design
By daring man, he makes her sacred awe
(That guard from ill) his shelter, his temptation
To more than common guilt, and quite inverts
Celestial Art's intent. The trembling stars
See crimes gigantic, stalking through the gloom
With front erect, that hide their head by day,
And making night still darker by their deeds.
Slumbering in covert, till the shades descend,
Rapine and Murder, linked, now prowl for prey.
The miser earths his treasure; and the thief

Watching the mole, half-beggars him ere morn.
Now plots and foul conspiracies awake,
And, muffling up their horrors from the moon,
Havock and devastation they prepare,
And kingdoms tottering in the field of blood.
Now sons of riot in mid-revel rage.
What shall I do?—suppress it? or proclaim?
Why sleeps the thunder? Now, Lorenzo! now
His best friend's couch the rank adulterer
Ascends secure, and laughs at gods and men.
Preposterous madmen, void of fear or shame,
Lay their crimes bare to these chaste eyes of Heaven,
Yet shrink and shudder at a mortal's sight.
Were moon and stars for villains only made
To guide, yet screen them, with tenebrious light?
No; they were made to fashion the sublime
Of human hearts, and wiser make the wise.
Those ends were answered once, when mortals lived
Of stronger wing, of aquiline ascent,
In theory sublime. O how unlike
Those vermine of the night, this moment sung,
Who crawl on earth, and on her venom feed!
Those ancient sages, human stars! they met
Their brothers of the skies at midnight hour,
Their counsel asked, and what they asked obeyed.
The Stagirite, and Plato, he who drank
The poisoned bowl, and he of Tusculum,
With him of Corduba, (immortal names!)
In these unbounded and Elysian walks,
An area fit for gods and godlike men.
They took their nightly round, through radiant paths,
By seraphs trod; instructed, chiefly, thus,
To tread in their bright footsteps here below,
To walk in worth still brighter than the skies.
There they contracted their contempt of earth;
Of hopes eternal kindled there the fire;
There, as in near approach, they glowed, and grew
(Great visitants!) more intimate with GOD,
More worth to men, more joyous to themselves.
Through various virtues they, with ardour, ran
The zodiac of their learned illustrious lives.
In Christian hearts O for a Pagan zeal!
A needful, but opprobrious prayer! as much
Our ardour less, as is our greater light.
How monstrous this in morals! Scarce more strange
Would this phenomenon in nature strike,
A sun that froze her, or a star that warmed.
What taught these heroes of the moral world?
To these thou giv'st thy praise, give credit too.
These doctors ne'er were pensioned to deceive thee,
And Pagan tutors are thy taste?—They taught,
That narrow views betrays to misery;
That wise it is to comprehend the whole;
That virtue rose from nature, pondered well,
The single base of virtue built to Heaven;
That God and Nature our attention claim;
That Nature is the glass reflecting God,
As, by the sea, reflected is the sun,
Too glorious to be gazed on in his sphere;
That mind immortal loves immortal aims;
That boundless mind affects a boundless space;
That vast surveys, and the sublime of things,
The soul assimilate, and make her great;
That, therefore, Heaven her glories, as a fund
Of inspiration, thus spreads out to man.
Such are their doctrines; such the Night inspired.
And what more true? what truth of greater weight?
The soul of man was made to walk the skies,
Delightful outlet of her prison here!
There, disencumbered of her chains, the ties
Of toys terrestrial, she can rove at large;
There freely can respire, dilate, extend,
In full proportion let loose all her powers,
And, undeluded, grasp at something great.
Nor as a stranger does she wander there,
But, wondering herself, through wonder strays;
Contemplating their grandeur, finds her own;
Dives deep in their economy divine,
Sits high in judgment on their various laws,
And, like a master, judges not amiss.
Hence greatly pleased, and justly proud, the soul
Grows conscious of her birth celestial; breathes
More life, more vigour, in her native air,
And feels herself at home among the stars,
And, feeling, emulates her country's praise.
What call we, then, the firmament, Lorenzo?
As earth the body, since the skies sustain
The soul with food that gives immortal life,
Call it the noblest pasture of the mind,
Which there expatiates, strengthens, and exults,
And riots through the luxuries of thought.
Call it the garden of the Deity,
Blossomed with stars, redundant in the growth
Of fruit ambrosial, moral fruit to man.
Call it the breast-plate of the true High-priest,
Ardent with gems oracular, that give,
In points of highest moment, right response;
And ill neglected, if we prize our peace.
Thus have we found a true astrology;
Thus have we found a new and noble sense,
In which alone stars govern human fates.
O that the stars (as some have feigned) let fall
Bloodshed and havock on embattled realms,
And rescued monarchs from so black a guilt!
Bourbon! this wish how generous in a foe!
Wouldst thou be great, wouldst thou become a god,
And stick thy deathless name among the stars,
For mighty conquests on a needle's point?
Instead of forging chains for foreigners;
Bastile, thy tutor; grandeur, all thy aim?
As yet thou know'st not what it is. How great,
How glorious, then appears the mind of man,
When in it all the stars and planets roll!

And what it seems, it is. Great objects make
Great minds, enlarging as their views enlarge;
Those still more godlike as these more divine.
And more divine than these, thou canst not see.
Dazzled, o'erpowered, with the delicious draught
Of miscellaneous splendours, how I reel
From thought to thought, inebriate, without end!
An Eden this! a Paradise unlost!
I meet the Deity in every view,
And tremble at my nakedness before him!
O that I could but reach the tree of life;
For here it grows unguarded from our taste;
No flaming sword denies our entrance here:
Would man but gather, he might live for ever.
Lorenzo! much of mortal hast thou seen:
Of curious arts art thou more fond? then mark
The mathematic glories of the skies,
In number, weight, and measure, all ordained.
Lorenzo's boasted builders, Chance and Fate,
Are left to finish his aërial towers;
Wisdom and Choice, their well-known characters
Here deep impress, and claim it for their own.
Though splendid all, no splendour void of use.
Use rivals beauty, art contends with power;
No wanton waste amid effuse expanse,
The great Economist adjusting all
To prudent pomp, magnificently wise.
How rich the prospect! and for ever new;
And newest, to the man that views it most;
For newer still in infinite succeeds.
Then these aërial racers, O how swift!
How the shaft loiters from the strongest string;
Spirit alone can distance the career,
Orb above ascending, without end!
Circle in circle, without end inclosed!
Wheel within wheel, Ezekiel, like to thine!
Like thine, it seems a vision or a dream:
Though seen, we labour to believe it true!
What involution! what extent! what swarms
Of worlds, that laugh at earth! immensely great!
Immensely distant from each other's spheres!
What, then, the wondrous space through which they roll?
At once it quite ingulfs all human thought;
'Tis Comprehension's absolute defeat.
Nor think thou seest a wild disorder here:
Through this illustrious chaos to the sight,
Arrangement neat and chastest order reign.
The path prescribed, inviolably kept,
Upbraids the lawless sallies of mankind.
Worlds, ever thwarting, never interfere;
What knots are tied! how soon are they dissolved,
And set the seeming married planets free!
They rove for ever, without error rove;
Confusion unconfused! nor less admire
This tumult untumultuous; all on wing!
In motion all! yet what profound repose;
What fervid action, yet no noise! as awed
To silence by the presence of their Lord;
Or hushed, by his command, in love to man.
And bid let fall soft beams on human rest,
Restless themselves. On yon cerulean plain,
In exultation to their God and thine,
They dance, they sing eternal jubilee,
Eternal celebration of his praise!
But since their song arrives not at our ear,
Their dance perplexed exhibits to the sight
Fair hieroglyphic of his peerless power.
Mark how the labyrinthian turns they take,
The circles intricate, and mystic maze,
Weave the grand cipher of Omnipotence;
To gods how great! how legible to man!
Leaves so much wonder greater wonder still?
Where are the pillars that support the skies?
What more than Atlantean shoulder props
Th' incumbent load? what magic, what strange art,
In fluid air these ponderous orbs sustains?
Who would not think them hung in golden chains?
And so they are; in the high will of Heaven,
Which fixes all; makes adamant,
Or air of adamant; makes all of nought,
Or nought of all, if such the dread decree.
Imagine, from their deep foundations torn,
The most gigantic sons of earth, the broad
And towering Alps, all tossed into the sea;
And, light as down, or volatile as air,
Their bulks enormous dancing on the waves,
In time and measure exquisite; while all
The winds, in emulation of the spheres,
Tune their sonorous instruments aloft,
The concert swell, and animate the ball.
Would this appear amazing?—what then worlds
In a far thinner element sustained,
And acting the same part with greater skill,
More rapid movement, and for noblest ends?
More obvious ends to pass, are not these stars
The seats majestic, proud imperial thrones,
On which angelic delegates of Heaven,
At certain periods, as the Sovereign nods,
Discharge high trusts of vengeance or of love,
To clothe in outward grandeur grand design,
And acts more solemn still more solemnize?
Ye citizens of air! what ardent thanks,
What full effusion of the grateful heart,
Is due from man, indulged in such a sight!
A sight so noble! and a sight so kind!
It drops new truths at every new survey!
Feels not Lorenzo something stir within,
That sweeps away all period? As these spheres
Measure duration, they no less inspire
The godlike hope of ages without end.
The boundless space, through which these rovers take
Their restless roam, suggests the sister-thought
Of boundless time. Thus, by kind Nature's skill,
To man unlaboured, that important guest,
Eternity, finds entrance at the sight;
And an eternity for man ordained,

Or these his destined midnight counsellors,
The stars, had never whispered it to man.
Nature informs, but ne'er insults, her sons:
Could she, then, kindle the most ardent wish
To disappoint it?—That is blasphemy!
Thus of thy creed a second article,
Momentous as the existence of a God,
Is found (as I conceive) where rarely sought,
And thou may'st read thy soul immortal here.
Here, then, Lorenzo! on these glories dwell,
Nor want the gilt, illuminated roof,
That calls the wretched gay to dark delights.
Assemblies?—this is one divinely bright;
Here, unendangered in health, wealth, or fame,
Range through the fairest, and the Sultan scorn.
He, wise as thou, no crescent holds so fair
As that which on his turban awes a world,
And thinks the moon is proud to copy him.
Look on her, and gain more than worlds can give,
A mind superior to the charms of power.
Thou, muffled in delusions of this life!
Can yonder moon turn Ocean in his bed
From side to side, in constant ebb and flow,
And purify from stench his watery realms,
And fails her moral influence? wants she power
To turn Lorenzo's stubborn tide of thought
From stagnating on earth's infected shore,
And purge from nuisance his corrupted heart?
Fails her attraction, when it draws to Heaven?
Nay, and to what thou valuest more, earth's joy?
Minds elevate, and panting for unseen,
And defecate from sense, alone obtain
Full relish of existence undeflowered,
The life of life, the zest of worldly bliss;
All else on earth amounts—to what? to this,
'Bad to be suffered, blessings to be left:'
Earth's richest inventory boasts no more.
Of higher scenes be then the call obeyed.
O let me gaze!—of gazing there's no end.
O let me think!—thought, too, is wildered here;
In mid-way flight Imagination tires;
Yet soon reprunes her wing to soar anew,
Her point unable to forbear or gain;
So great the pleasure, so profound the plan!
A banquet this, where men and angels meet,
Eat the same manna, mingle earth and Heaven.
How distant some of these nocturnal suns!
So distant (says the sage) 'twere not absurd
To doubt if beams, set out at Nature's birth,
Are yet arrived at this so foreign world,
Though nothing half so rapid as their flight.
An eye of awe and wonder let me roll,
And roll for ever Who can satiate sight
In such a scene? in such an ocean wide
Of deep astonishment, where depth, height, breadth
Are lost in their extremes; and where to count
The thick-sown glories in this field of fire,
Perhaps a seraph's computation fails.
Now go, Ambition! boast thy boundless might
In conquest o'er the tenth part of a grain.
And yet Lorenzo calls for miracles,
To give his tottering faith a solid base.
Why call for less than is already thine?
Thou art no novice in theology:
What is a miracle?—'tis a reproach,
'Tis an implicit satire on mankind,
And while it satisfies it censures too.
To common sense great Nature's course proclaims
A Deity. When mankind falls asleep,
A miracle is sent as an alarm
To wake the world, and prove him o'er again,
By recent argument, but not more strong.
Say which imports more plenitude of power,
Or Nature's laws to fix, or to repeal?
To make a sun, or stop his mid career?
To countermand his orders, and send back
The flaming courier to the frighted east,
Warmed and astonished at his evening ray:
Or bid the moon, as with her journey tired,
In Ajalon's soft flowery vale repose?
Great things are these? still greater to create.
From Adam's bower look down through the whole train
Of miracles;—resistless is their power!
They do not, can not, more amaze the mind,
Than this, called unmiraculous survey,
If duly weighed, if rationally seen,
If seen with human eyes. The brute, indeed,
Sees nought but spangles here; the fool no more.
Say'st thou, 'The course of Nature governs all?'
The course of Nature is the art of GOD.
The miracles thou call'st for, this attest;
For say, could Nature Nature's course control?
But, miracles apart, who sees him not
Nature's Controller, Author, Guide, and End?
Who turns his eye on Nature's midnight face,
But must inquire—'What hand behind the scene
What arm Almighty, put these wheeling globes
In motion, and wound up the vast machine?
Who rounded in his palm these spacious orbs?
Who bowled them flaming through the dark profound,
Numerous as glittering gems of morning dew,
Or sparks from populous cities in a blaze,
And set the bosom of old Night on fire,
Peopled her desert, and made Horror smile?'
Or if the military style delights thee,
(For stars have fought their battles, leagued with man)
'Who marshals this bright host? enrols their names,
Appoints their posts, their marches, and returns,
Punctual, at stated periods? who disbands
These veteran troops, their final duty done,
If e'er disbanded?—HE, whose potent word,
Like the loud trumpet, levied first their powers

In Night's inglorious empire, where they slept
In beds of darkness; armed them with fierce flames;
Arranged, and disciplined, and clothed in gold,
And called them out of Chaos to the field,
Where now they war with Vice and Unbelief.
O let us join this army! joining these
Will give us hearts intrepid, at that hour
When brighter flames shall cut a darker night;
When these strong demonstrations of a GOD
Shall hide their heads, or tumble from their spheres,
And one eternal curtain cover all!
Struck at that thought, as new-awaked, I lift
A more enlightened eye, and read the stars
To man still more propitious, and their aid
(Though guiltless of idolatry) implore,
Nor longer rob them of their noblest name.
O ye dividers of my time! ye bright
Accomptants of my days, and months, and years,
In your fair kalendar distinctly marked!
Since that authentic, radiant register,
Though man inspects it not, stands good against him;
Since you and years roll on, though man stands still,
Teach me my days to number, and apply
My trembling heart to wisdom, now beyond
All shadow of excuse for fooling on.
Age smooths our path to prudence; sweeps aside
The snares keen appetite and passion spread
To catch stray souls; and wo to that gray head
Whose folly would undo what age has done!
Aid, then, aid, all ye Stars!—Much rather Thou,
Great Artist! Thou whose finger set aright
This exquisite machine, with all its wheels,
Though intervolved, exact; and pointing out
Life's rapid and irrevocable flight
With such an index fair as none can miss
Who lifts an eye, nor sleeps till it is closed;
Open mine eye, dread Deity! to read
The tacit doctrine of thy works; to see
Things as they are, unaltered through the glass
Of worldly wishes. Time, Eternity!
('Tis these, mismeasured, ruin all mankind)
Set them before me; let me lay them both
In equal scale, and learn their various weight.
Let time appear a moment, as it is;
And let eternity's full orb, at once,
Turn on my soul, and strike it into Heaven.
When shall I see far more than charms me now,
Gaze on creation's model in thy breast
Unveiled, nor wonder at the transcript more?
When this vile, foreign dust, which smothers all
That travel earth's deep vale, shall I shake off?
When shall my soul her incarnation quit,
And, re-adopted to thy blessed embrace,
Obtain her apotheosis in thee?—
Dost think, Lorenzo, this is wandering wide?
No; 'tis directly striking at the mark.
To wake thy dead devotion* was my point;
And how I bless Night's consecrating shades,
Which to a temple turn an universe,
Fill us with great ideas, full of Heaven,
And antidote the pestilential earth!
In every storm that either frowns or falls,
What an asylum has the soul in prayer!
And what a fane is this, in which to pray!
And what a GOD must dwell in such a fane!
O what a genius must inform the skies!
And is Lorenzo's salamander-heart
Cold, and untouched, amid these sacred fires?
O ye nocturnal sparks! ye glowing embers,
On Heaven's broad hearth! Who burn, or burn no more,
Who blaze, or die, as great Jehovah's breath
Or blows you, or forbears, assist my song!
Pour your whole influence; exorcise his heart,
So long possessed, and bring him back to man.
And is Lorenzo a demurrer still?
Pride in thy parts provokes thee to contest
Truths, which, contested, put thy parts to shame:
Nor shame they more Lorenzo's head than heart,
A faithless heart, how despicably small!
Too straight, aught great or generous to receive!
Filled with an atom! filled and fouled with self!
And self-mistaken! self, that lasts an hour!
Instincts and passions of the nobler kind
Lie suffocated there, or they alone,
Reason apart, would wake high hope, and open,
To ravished thought, that intellectual sphere,
Where Order, Wisdom, Goodness, Providence,
Their endless miracles of love display,
And promise all the truly great desire.
The mind that would be happy must be great;
Great in its wishes, great in its surveys.
Extended views a narrow mind extend,
Push out its corrugate, expansive make,
Which, ere long, more than planets shall embrace.
A man of compass makes a man of worth:
Divine contemplate, and become divine!
As man was made for glory and for bliss,
All littleness is in approach to wo.
Open thy bosom, set thy wishes wide,
And let in manhood; let in happiness;
Admit the boundless theatre of thought
From nothing, up to God; which makes a man.
Take God from Nature, nothing great is left;
Man's mind is in a pit, and nothing sees;
Man's heart is in a jakes, and loves the mire.
Emerge from thy profound; erect thine eye;
See thy distress! how close art thou besieged
Besieged by Nature, the proud sceptic's foe!
Inclosed by these innumerable worlds,
Sparkling conviction on the darkest mind,
As in a golden net of Providence,

* See page 74.

How art thou caught, sure captive of belief!
From this thy blessed captivity what art,
What blasphemy to reason, sets thee free!
This scene is Heaven's indulgent violence;
Can'st thou bear up against this tide of glory?
What is earth bosomed in these ambient orbs,
But faith in God imposed, and pressed on man?
Dar'st thou still litigate thy desperate cause,
Spite of these numerous, awful witnesses,
And doubt the deposition of the skies?
O how laborious is thy way to ruin!
Laborious? 'tis impracticable quite
To sink beyond a doubt in this debate,
With all its weight of wisdom and of will,
And crime flagitious, I defy a fool.
Some wish they did, but no man disbelieves.
'God is a spirit;' spirit can not strike
These gross material organs; God by man
As much is seen, as man a God can see,
In these astonishing exploits of power
What order, beauty, motion, distance, size!
Concertion of design, how exquisite!
How complicate in their divine police!
Apt means! great ends! consent to general good!—
Each attribute of these material gods,
So long (and that with specious pleas) adored,
A separate conquest gains o'er rebel thought,
And leads in triumph the whole mind of man.'
Lorenzo! this may seem harangue to thee;
Such all is apt to seem, that thwarts our will.
And dost thou, then, demand a simple proof
Of this great master-moral of the skies,
Unskilled, or disinclined, to read it there?
Since 'tis the basis, and all drops without it,
Take it in one compact, unbroken chain.
Such proof insists on an attentive ear,
'Twill not make one amid a mob of thoughts,
And for thy notice struggle with the world.
Retire;—the world shut out;—thy thoughts call home;—
Imagination's airy wing repress;—
Lock up thy senses;—let no passion stir;—
Wake all to Reason;—let her reign alone;
Then in thy soul's deep silence, and the depth
Of Nature's silence, midnight, thus inquire,
As I have done, and shall inquire no more.
In nature's channel thus the questions run:
'What am I? and from whence?—I nothing know
But that I am; and since I am, conclude
Something eternal: had there e'er been nought,
Nought still had been: eternal there must be.—
But what eternal?—Why not human race?
And Adam's ancestors without an end?—
That's hard to be conceived, since every link
Of that long-chained succession is so frail.
Can every part depend, and not the whole?
Yet grant it true, new difficulties rise;
I'm still quite out at sea, nor see the shore.
Whence earth, and these bright orbs?—Eternal too?—
Grant matter was eternal, still these orbs
Would want some other father;—much design
Is seen in all their motions, all their makes,
Design implies intelligence and art;
That can't be from themselves—or man: that art
Man scarce can comprehend, could man bestow!
And nothing greater yet allowed, than man.—
Who motion, foreign to the smallest grain,
Shot through vast masses of enormous weight?
Who bid brute matter's restive lump assume
Such various forms, and gave it wings to fly?
Has matter innate motion? then each atom,
Asserting its indisputable right
To dance, would form an universe of dust:
Has matter none? then whence these glorious forms
And boundless flights, from shapeless and reposed?
Has matter more than motion? has it thought,
Judgment, and genius? is it deeply learned
In mathematics? has it framed such laws,
Which, but to guess, a Newton made immortal?—
If so, how each sage atom laughs at me,
Who thinks a clod inferior to a man!
If art to form, and counsel to conduct,
And that with greater far than human skill,
Resides not in each block,—a Godhead reigns!—
Grant, then, invisible, eternal Mind;
That granted, all is solved;—but granting that,
Draw I not o'er me a still darker cloud?
Grant I not that, which I can ne'er conceive?
A being without origin or end!—
Hail, human Liberty! there is no God—
Yet why? on either scheme that knot subsists;
Subsist it must, in God or human race;
If in the last, how many knots beside,
Indissoluble all?—why choose it there
Where, chosen, still subsist ten thousand more?
Reject it where, that chosen, all the rest,
Dispersed, leave Reason's whole horizon clear?
This is not Reason's dictate; Reason says,
Close with the side where one grain turns the scale.
What vast preponderance is here! can Reason
With louder voice exclaim—'Believe a God?'
And Reason heard, is the sole mark of man.
What things impossible must man think true,
On any other system? and how strange
To disbelieve, through mere credulity!
If in this chain Lorenzo finds no flaw,
Let it for ever bind him to belief.
And where the link, in which a flaw he finds?
And if a GOD there is, that GOD how great!
How great that Power whose providential care
Through these bright orbs' dark centres darts a ray!
Of Nature universal threads the whole!

And hangs Creation, like a precious gem,
Though little, on the footstool of his throne!
That little gem, how large! A weight let fall
From a fixed star, in ages can it reach
This distant earth? Say, then, Lorenzo, where,
Where ends this mighty building? where begin
The suburbs of Creation? where the wall
Whose battlements look o'er into the vale
Of non-existence, Nothing's strange abode?
Say at what point of space Jehovah dropped
His slackened line, and laid his balance by;
Weighed worlds, and measured infinite no more?
Where rears his terminating pillar high
Its extramundane head? and says to gods,
In characters illustrious as the sun,
'I stand the plan's proud period; I pronounce
The work accomplished; the creation closed;
Shout, all ye Gods! nor shout, ye Gods, alone;
Of all that lives, or, if devoid of life,
That rests, or rolls; ye Heights and Depths re-sound!
Resound! resound! ye Depths and Heights re-sound!'
Hard are those questions!—answer harder still.
Is this the sole exploit, the single birth,
The solitary son of Power Divine?
Or has the Almighty Father, with a breath,
Impregnated the womb of distant Space?
Has he not bid, in various provinces,
Brother-creations the dark bowels burst
Of Night primeval, barren now no more?
And He, the central sun, transpiercing all
Those giant-generations which disport,
And dance as motes, in his meridian ray;
That ray withdrawn, benighted, or absorbed
In that abyss of horror whence they sprung;
While Chaos triumphs, repossest of all
Rival Creation ravished from his throne?
Chaos! of Nature both the womb and grave!
Think'st thou my scheme, Lorenzo, spreads too wide?
Is this extravagant?—No; this is just;
Just in conjecture, though 'twere false in fact.
If 'tis an error, 'tis an error sprung
From noble root, high thought of the Most High.
But wherefore error? who can prove it such?
He that can set Omnipotence a bound,
Can man conceive beyond what God can do?
Nothing, but quite impossible, is hard.
He summons into being, with like ease,
A whole creation, and a single grain.
Speaks he the word! a thousand worlds are born!
A thousand worlds! there's space for millions more;
And in what space can his great fiat fail?
Condemn me not, cold critic! but indulge
The warm imagination: why condemn?
Why not indulge such thoughts as swell our hearts
With fuller admiration of that Power
Who gives our hearts with such high thoughts to swell!
Why not indulge in his augmented praise?
Darts not his glory a still brighter ray,
The less is left to Chaos, and the realms
Of hideous Night, where Fancy strays aghast,
And, though most talkative, makes no report?
Still seems my thought enormous? think again;
Experience self shall aid thy lame belief.
Glasses, (that revelation to the sight!)
Have they not led us in the deep disclose
Of fine-spun Nature, exquisitely small,
And, though demonstrated, still ill-conceived?
If, then, on the reverse the mind would mount
In magnitude; what mind can mount too far,
To keep the balance, and creation poise?
Defect alone can err on such a theme:
What is too great, if we the cause survey?
Stupendous Architect! Thou, Thou, art all!
My soul flies up and down in thoughts of Thee,
And finds herself but the centre still!
I AM, thy name! existence all thine own!
Creation's nothing, flattered much if styled
'The thin, the fleeting atmosphere of God.'
O for the voice—of what? of whom?—wha voice
Can answer to my wants, in such ascent
As dares to deem one universe too small?
Tell me, Lorenzo! (for now Fancy glows,
Fired in the vortex of almighty power)
Is not this home-creation, in the map
Of universal Nature, as a speck,
Like fair Britannia, in our little ball;
Exceeding fair and glorious, for its size,
But, elsewhere, far outmeasured, far outshone?
In fancy (for the fact beyond us lies)
Canst thou not figure it, an isle almost
Too small for notice in the vast of being;
Severed by mighty seas of unbuilt space
From other realms; from ample continents
Of higher life, where nobler natives dwell;
Less northern, less remote from Deity.
Glowing beneath the line of the Supreme,
Where souls in excellence make haste, put forth
Luxuriant growths, nor the late autumn wait
Of human worth, but ripen soon to gods?
Yet why drown Fancy in such depths as these?
Return, presumptuous Rover! and confess
The bounds of man, nor blame them, as too small.
Enjoy we not full scope in what is seen?
Full ample the dominions of the sun!
Full glorious to behold! how far, how wide
The matchless monarch from his flaming throne,
Lavish of lustre, throws his beams about him,
Farther and faster than a thought can fly,
And feeds his planets with eternal fires!
This Heliopolis, by greater far
Than the proud tyrant of the Nile, was built;

And He alone who built it, can destroy.
Beyond this city why strays human thought?
One wonderful enough for man to know!
One infinite enough for man to range!
One firmament enough for man to read!
O what voluminous instruction here!
What page of wisdom is denied him? none,
If learning his chief lesson makes him wise.
Nor is instruction here our only gain:
There dwells a noble pathos in the skies,
Which warms our passions, proselytes our hearts.
How eloquently shines the glowing pole!
With what authority it gives its charge,
Remonstrating great truths in style sublime,
Though silent, loud: heard earth around; above
The planets heard; and not unheard in hell;
Hell has her wonder, though too proud to praise.
Is earth, then, more infernal? has she those
Who neither praise (Lorenzo,) nor admire?
Lorenzo's admiration, pre-engaged,
Ne'er asked the moon one question; never held
Least correspondence with a single star;
Ne'er reared an altar to the queen of Heaven
Walking in brightness, or her train adored.
Their sublunary rivals have long since
Engrossed his whole devotion; stars malign,
Which made the fond astronomer run mad,
Darken his intellect, corrupt his heart;
Cause him to sacrifice his fame and peace
To momentary madness, called delight:
Idolater more gross, than ever kissed
The lifted hand to Luna, or poured out
The blood to Jove.—O Thou, to whom belongs
All sacrifice! O Thou great Jove unfeigned!
Divine Instructor! Thy first volume this
For man's perusal; all in capitals;
In moon and stars (Heaven's golden alphabet,)
Emblazed to seize the sight, who runs may read;
Who reads can understand. 'Tis unconfined
To Christian land or Jewry; fairly writ,
In language universal, to mankind;
A language lofty to the learned, yet plain
To those that feed the flock, or guide the plough,
Or from its husk strike out the bounding grain:
A language worthy the great mind that speaks:
Preface and comment to the sacred page,
Which oft refers its reader to the skies,
As presupposing his first lesson there,
And scripture 'self a fragment, that unread.
Stupendous book of wisdom to the wise!
Stupendous book! and opened, Night, by thee.
By thee much opened, I confess, O Night!
Yet more I wish; yet how shall I prevail?
Say, gentle Night, whose modest maiden beams,
Give us a new creation, and present
The world's great picture softened to the sight;
Nay, kinder far, far more indulgent still,
Say thou, whose mild dominion's silver key
Unlocks our hemisphere, and sets to view
Worlds beyond number; worlds concealed by day
Behind the proud and envious star of noon;
Canst thou not draw a deeper scene,—and show
The Mighty Potentate, to whom belong
These rich regalia, pompously displayed
To kindle that high hope? Like him of Uz,
I gaze around, I search on every side—
O for a glimpse of Him my soul adores:
As the chased hart, amid the desert waste,
Pants for the living stream, for Him who made her,
So pants the thirsty soul amid the blank
Of sublunary joys. Say, goddess, where—
Where blazes his bright court? where burns his throne?
Thou knowest, for Thou art near Him; by thee, round
His grand pavilion, sacred Fame reports
The sable curtain drawn. If not, can none
Of thy fair daughter-train, so swift of wing,
Who travel far, discover where he dwells?
A star his dwelling pointed out below.
Ye Pleïades! Arcturus! Mazaroth!
And thou, Orion! of still keener eye,
Say ye, who guide the wildered in the waves,
And bring them out of tempest into port,—
On which hand must I bend my course to find him?
These courtiers keep the secret of their king;
I wake whole nights in vain, to steal it from them.
I wake, and, waking, climb Night's radiant scale
From sphere to sphere, the steps by Nature set
For man's ascent, at once to tempt and aid;
To tempt his eye, and aid his towering thought,
Till it arrives at the great goal of all.
In ardent Contemplation's rapid car,
From earth, as from my barrier, I set out.
How swift I mount; diminished earth recedes:
I pass the moon; and, from her farther side,
Pierce Heaven's blue curtain; strike into remote;
Where, with his lifted tube, the subtle sage
His artificial airy journey takes,
And to celestial lengthens human sight.
I pause at every planet on my road,
And ask for Him who gives their orbs to roll,
Their foreheads fair to shine. From Saturn's ring,
In which of earth's an army might be lost,
With the bold comet take my bolder flight,
Amid those sovereign glories of the skies,
Of independent native lustre proud;
The souls of systems, and the lords of life,
Through their wide empires!—What behold I now?
A wilderness of wonder burning round,
Where larger suns inhabit higher spheres,
Perhaps the villas of descending gods;
Nor halt I here; my toil is but begun;
'Tis but the threshold of the Deity;
Or, far beneath it, I am groveling still.
Nor is it strange; I built on a mistake:
The grandeur of his works, whence Folly sought

For aid, to reason sets his glory higher;
Who built thus high for worms (mere worm to Him)
O where, Lorenzo, must the builder dwell?
Pause, then, and for a moment here respire—
If human thought can keep its station here.
Where am I?—where is earth? nay, where art thou,
O Sun?—Is the sun turn'd recluse? and are
His boasted expeditions short to mine?—
To mine how short! On Nature's Alps I stand,
And see a thousand firmaments beneath:
A thousand systems, as a thousand grains!
So much a stranger, and so late arrived,
How can man's curious spirit not inquire
What are the natives of this world sublime,
Of this so foreign unterrestrial sphere,
Where mortal, untranslated, never strayed?
'O ye, as distant from my little home
As swiftest sunbeams in an age can fly;
Far from my native element I roam,
In quest of new and wonderful, to man.
What province this, of his immense domain,
Whom all obeys? or mortals here, or gods?
Ye borderers on the coasts of bliss! what are you?
A colony from Heaven? or only raised
By frequent visit from Heaven's neighbouring realms,
To secondary gods, and half divine?
Whate'er your nature, this is past dispute,
Far other life you live, far other tongue
You talk, far other thought, perhaps, you think,
Than man. How various are the works of God!
But say, what thought? Is Reason here enthroned,
And absolute? or Sense in arms against her?
Have you too lights? or need you no revealed?
Enjoy your happy realms their golden age?
And had your Eden an abstemious Eve?
Our Eve's fair daughters prove their pedigree,
And ask their Adams—'Who would not be wise?'
Or, if your mother fell, are you redeemed?
And if redeemed—is your Redeemer scorned?
Is this your final residence? if not,
Change you your scene translated, or by death?
And if by death, what death?—Know you disease,
Or horrid war?—With war, this fatal hour,
Europa groans, (so call we a small field
Where kings run mad.) In our world, Death deputes
Intemperance to do the work of Age,
And, hanging up the quiver Nature gave him,
As slow of execution, for despatch
Sends forth imperial butchers; bids them slay
Their sheep, (the silly sheep they fleeced before)
And toss him twice ten thousand at a meal.
Sit all your executioners on thrones?
With you, can rage for plunder, make a god?
And bloodshed wash out every other stain?—
But you, perhaps, can't bleed: from matter gross
Your spirits clean are delicately clad
In fine-spun ether, privileged to soar,
Unloaded, uninfected. How unlike
The lot of man! how few of human race
By their own mud unmurdered! how we wage
Self-war eternal!—Is your painful day
Of hardy conflict o'er? or are you still
Raw candidates at school? and have you those
Who disaffect reversions, as with us?—
But what are we? you never heard of man,
Or earth, the bedlam of the universe!
Where Reason (undiseased with you) runs mad,
And nurses Folly's children as her own,
Fond of the foulest. In the sacred mount
Of Holiness, where Reason is pronounced
Infallible, and thunders like a god,
E'en there, by saints the demons are outdone;
What these think wrong, our saints refine to right;
And kindly teach dull Hell her own black arts;
Satan, instructed, o'er their morals smiles.—
But this how strange to you, who know not man?
Has the least rumour of our race arrived?
Called here Elijah in his flaming car?
Past by you the good Enoch, on his road
To those fair fields whence Lucifer was hurled
Who brushed, perhaps, your sphere in his descent,
Stained your pure crystal ether, or let fall
A short eclipse from his portentous shade?
O that the fiend had lodged on some broad orb
Athwart his way, nor reached his present home,
Then blackened earth, with footsteps fouled in hell,
Now washed in ocean, as from Rome he past
To Britain's isle; too, too conspicuous there.'
But this is all digression: where is He
That o'er Heaven's battlements the felon hurled
To groans, and chains, and darkness? where is He
Who sees creation's summit in a vale?
He whom, while man is man, he can't but seek,
And if he finds, commences more than man?
O for a telescope his throne to reach!
Tell me, ye learned on earth! or blessed above!
Ye searching, ye Newtonian angels! tell
Where your Great Master's orb? his planets where?
Those conscious satellites, those morning-stars,
First-born of Deity! from central love,
By veneration most profound, thrown off;
By sweet attraction no less strongly drawn;
Awed, and yet raptured; raptured, yet serene;
Past thought illustrious, but with borrowed beams;
In still approaching circles still remote,
Revolving round the sun's eternal Sire?
Or sent, in lines direct, on embassies
To nations—in what latitude?—beyond
Terrestrial thought's horizon!—and on what
High errands sent?—Here human effort ends,
And leaves me still a stranger to his throne
Full well it might! I quite mistook my road;
Born in an age more curious than devout;
More fond to fix the place of Heaven or hell,
Than studious this to shun, or that secure.

'Tis not the curious, but the pious path
That leads me to my point. Lorenzo! know,
Without or star or angel for their guide,
Who worship God shall find him. Humble Love,
And not proud Reason, keeps the door of Heaven;
Love finds admission where proud Science fails.
Man's science is the culture of his heart,
And not to lose his plummet in the depths
Of Nature, or the more profound of GOD:
Either to know, is an attempt that sets
The wisest on a level with the fool.
To fathom Nature (ill attempted here!)
Past doubt, is deep philosophy above;
Higher degrees in bliss archangels take,
As deeper learned, the deepest learning still.
For what a thunder of Omnipotence
(So might I dare to speak) is seen in all!
In man! in earth! in more amazing skies?
Teaching this lesson Pride is loth to learn—
'Not deeply to discern, not much to know,
Mankind was born to wonder and adore!'
And is there cause for higher wonder still
Than that which struck us from our past surveys?
Yes, and for deeper admiration too.
From my late airy travel unconfined,
Have I learned nothing?—Yes, Lorenzo! this;
Each of these stars is a religious house;
I saw their altars smoke, their incense rise,
And heard hosannas ring through every sphere,
A seminary fraught with future gods.
Nature all o'er is consecrated ground,
Teeming with growths immortal and divine.
The great Proprietor's all-bounteous hand
Leaves nothing waste, but sows these fiery fields
With seeds of Reason, which to virtues rise
Beneath his genial ray; and, if escaped
The pestilential blasts of stubborn will,
When grown mature, are gathered for the skies.
And is devotion thought too much on earth,
When beings, so superior, homage boast,
And triumph in prostrations to the throne?
But wherefore more of planets or of stars?
Ethereal journies, and, discovered there,
Ten thousand worlds, ten thousand ways devout,
All Nature sending incense to the throne,
Except the bold Lorenzos of our sphere?
Opening the solemn sources of my soul,
Since I have poured, like feigned Eridanus,
My flowing numbers o'er the flaming skies,
Nor see of fancy or of fact what more
Invites the Muse—here turn we, and review
Our past nocturnal landscape wide;—then say,
Say, then, Lorenzo! with what burst of heart
The whole, at once, revolving in his thought,
Must man exclaim, adoring and aghast?
'O what a root! O what a branch, is here!
O what a Father! what a family!
Worlds! systems! and creations!—and creations,
In one agglomerated cluster, hung,
Great Vine!* on thee; on thee the cluster hangs,
The filial cluster! infinitely spread
In glowing globes, with various being fraught,
And drinks (nectareous draught!) immortal life.
Or, shall I say (for who can say enough?)
A constellation of ten thousand gems,
(And, O! of what dimension! of what weight!)
Set in one signet, flames on the right hand
Of Majesty divine! The blazing seal,
That deeply stamps, on all created mind,
Indelible, his sovereign attributes,
Omnipotence and Love! that passing bound,
And this surpassing that. Nor stop we here
For want of power in God, but thought in man.
E'en this acknowledged, leaves us still in debt;
If greater aught, that greater all is thine,
Dread Sire!—Accept this miniature of Thee,
And pardon an attempt from mortal thought,
In which archangels might have failed, unblamed
How such ideas of th' Almighty's power,
And such ideas of th' Almighty's plan,
(Ideas not absurd) distend the thought
Of feeble mortals! nor of them alone!
The fulness of the Deity breaks forth
In inconceivables, to men and gods.
Think, then, O think, nor ever drop the thought,
How low must man descend when gods adore!
Have I not, then, accomplished my proud boast?
Did I not tell thee 'We would mount, Lorenzo!
And kindle our devotion at the stars?'†
And have I failed? and did I flatter thee?
And art all adamant? and dost confute,
All urged, with one irrefragable smile?
Lorenzo! mirth how miserable here!
Swear by the stars, by Him who made them, swear,
Thy heart, henceforth, shall be as pure as they;
Then thou, like them, shalt shine: like them, shalt rise
From low to lofty, from obscure to bright,
By due gradation, Nature's sacred law.
The stars from whence?—ask Chaos—he can tell.
These bright temptations to idolatry
From darkness and confusion took their birth;
Sons of Deformity! from fluid dregs
Tartarean, first they rose to masses rude,
And then to spheres opaque; then dimly shone,
Then brightened; then blazed out in perfect day.
Nature delights in progress, in advance
From worse to better; but when minds ascend,
Progress, in part, depends upon themselves.
Heaven aids exertion. Greater makes the great.
The voluntary little lessens more.
O be a man! and thou shalt be a god!
And half self-made!—ambition how divine!
O thou, ambitious of disgrace alone!
Still undevout? unkindled?—though high taught,

* John. xv. 1. † See page 74

Schooled by the skies, and pupil of the stars,
Rank coward to the fashionable world!
Art thou ashamed to bend thy knee to Heaven?
Cursed fume of pride, exhaled from deepest hell!
Pride in religion is man's highest praise.
Bent on destruction! and in love with death!
Not all these luminaries, quenched at once,
Were half so sad as one benighted mind,
Which gropes for happiness, and meets despair.
How like a widow in her weeds, the Night,
Amid her glimmering tapers, silent sits!
How sorrowful, how desolate, she weeps
Perpetual dews, and sadden's Nature's scene!
A scene more sad Sin makes the darkened soul,
All comfort kills, nor leaves one spark alive.
Though blind of heart, still open is thine eye.
Why such magnificence in all thou seest?
Of matter's grandeur, know one end is this,
To tell the rational, who gazes on it,—
'Though that immensely great, still greater he
Whose breast capacious, can embrace and lodge,
Unburdened, Nature's universal scheme;
Can grasp creation with a single thought;
Creation grasp, and not exclude its Sire.'—
To tell him farther—'It behoves him much
To guard the important, yet depending fate
Of being, brighter than a thousand suns;
One single ray of thought outshines them all.'—
And if man hears obedient, soon he'll soar
Superior heights, and on his purple wing,
His purple wing bedropped with eyes of gold,
Rising, where thought is now denied to rise,
Look down triumphant on these dazzling spheres.
Why then persist?—no mortal ever lived
But, dying, he pronounced (when words are true)
The whole that charms the absolutely vain;
Vain, and far worse!—Think thou with dying men!
O condescend to think as angels think!
O tolerate a chance for happiness!
Our nature such, ill choice insures ill fate;
And hell had been though there had been no GOD.
Dost thou not know, my new astronomer,
Earth, turning from the sun, brings night to man?
Man, turning from his GOD, brings endless night;
Where thou canst read no morals, find no friend,
Amend no manners, and expect no peace.
How deep the darkness! and the groan how loud!
And far, how far, from lambent are the flames!—
Such is Lorenzo's purchase! such his praise!
The proud, the politic Lorenzo's praise;
Though in his ear, and levelled at his heart,
I've half read o'er the volume of the skies.
For think not thou hast heard all this from me;
My song but echoes what great Nature speaks.
What has she spoken?—Thus the goddess spoke,
Thus speaks for ever:—'Place, at Nature's head,
A Sovereign which o'er all things rolls his eye,
Extends his wing, promulgates his commands,
But, above all, diffuses endless good;
To whom, for sure redress, the wronged may fly,
The vile for mercy, and the pained for peace;
By whom the various tenants of these spheres,
Diversified in fortunes, place, and powers,
Raised in enjoyment, as in worth they rise,
Arrive at length (if worthy such approach)
At that blessed fountain-head from which they stream,
Where conflict past redoubles present joy,
And present joy looks forward on increase,
And that on more! no period! every step
A double boon! a promise and a bliss.'
How easy sits this scheme on human hearts!
It suits their make, it sooths their vast desires;
Passion is pleased, and Reason asks no more:
'Tis rational! 'tis great!—but what is thine?
It darkens! shocks! excruciates! and confounds!
Leaves us quite naked, both of help and hope,
Sinking from bad to worse; few years the sport
Of Fortune, then the morsel of despair
Say then, Lorenzo! (for thou know'st it well)
What's vice—mere want of compass in our thought.
Religion what?—the proof of common sense.
How art thou hooted where the least prevails!
It is my fault if these truths call thee Fool?
And thou shalt never be miscalled by me.
Can neither Shame nor Terror stand thy friend?
And art thou still an insect in the mire?
How like thy guardian-angel have I flown,
Snatched thee from earth, escorted thee through all
Th' ethereal armies, walked thee like a god,
Through splendours of first magnitude, arranged
On either hand; clouds thrown beneath thy feet
Close cruised on the bright paradise of God,
And almost introduced thee to the throne!
And art thou still carousing, for delight,
Rank poison! first fermenting to mere froth,
And then subsiding into final gall?
To beings of sublime, immortal make,
How shocking is all joy whose end is sure!
Such joy more shocking still, the more it charms!
And dost thou choose what ends ere well begun,
And infamous as short? and dost thou choose
(Thou, to whose palate glory is so sweet)
To wade into perdition through contempt,
Not of poor bigots only, but thy own?
For I have peeped into thy covered heart,
And seen it blush beneath a boastful brow?
For by strong Guilt's most violent assault,
Conscience is but disabled; not destroyed.
O thou most awful being! and most vain!
Thy will how frail! how glorious is thy power!
Though dread Eternity has sown her seeds
Of bliss and wo in thy despotic breast;
Though Heaven and hell depend upon thy choice
A butterfly comes cross, and both are fled.
Is this the picture of a rational?
This horrid image, shall it be most just?

Lorenzo! no; it can not,—shall not be,
If there is force in reason, or in sounds,
Chanted beneath the glimpses of the moon
A magic, at this planetary hour,
When Slumber locks the general lip, and dreams,
Through senseless mazes, hunt souls uninspired.
Attend—the sacred mysteries begin——
My solemn night-born adjuration hear;
Hear, and I'll raise thy spirit from the dust,
While the stars gaze on this enchantment new;
Enchantment not infernal, but divine!
'By Silence, Death's peculiar attribute;
By Darkness, Guilt's inevitable doom;
By Darkness and by Silence, sisters dread!
That draw the curtain round Night's ebon throne,
And raise ideas solemn as the scene!
By Night, and all of awful Night presents
To thought or sense (of awful much, to both,
The goddess brings!) By these her trembling fires,
Like Vesta's, ever burning, and, like her's,
Sacred to thoughts immaculate and pure!
By these bright orators that prove and praise,
And press thee to revere the Deity,
Perhaps, too, aid thee, when revered, awhile,
To reach his throne, as stages of the soul
Through which, at different periods, she shall pass,
Refining gradual, for the final height,
And purging off some dross at every sphere!
By this dark pall thrown o'er the silent world!
By the world's kings and kingdoms most renowned,
From short Ambition's zenith set for ever,
Sad presage to vain boasters, now in bloom!
By the long list of swift mortality,
From Adam downward to this evening knell,
Which midnight waves in Fancy's startled eye,
And shocks her with an hundred centuries,
Round Death's black banner thronged in human thought!
By thousands now resigning their last breath,
And calling thee—wert thou so wise to hear!
By tombs o'er tombs arising, human earth
Ejected, to make room for—human earth,
The monarch's terror! and the sexton's trade!
By pompous obsequies that shun the day,
The torch funereal, and the nodding plume,
Which makes poor man's humiliation proud,
Boast of our ruin! triumph of our dust!
By the damp vault that weeps o'er royal bones,
And the pale lamp that shows the ghastly dead,
More ghastly through the thick incumbent gloom!
By visits (if there are) from darker scenes,
The gliding spectre! and the groaning grove!
By groans, and graves, and miseries that groan
For the grave's shelter! By desponding men,
Senseless to pains of death from pangs of guilt!
By Guilt's last audit! By yon moon in blood,
The rocking firmament, the falling stars,
And thunder's last discharge, great Nature's knell!
By second Chaos, and eternal Night,—
Be wise—nor let Philander blame my charm;
But own not ill discharged my double debt,
Love to the living, duty to the dead.
For know I'm but executor; he left
This moral legacy; I make it o'er
By his command: Philander hear in me,
And Heaven in both.—If deaf to these, oh! hear
Florello's tender voice; his weal depends
On thy resolve; it trembles at thy choice;
For his sake—love thyself: example strikes
All human hearts; a bad example more;
More still a father's; that insures his ruin.
As parent of his being, wouldst thou prove
Th' unnatural parent of his miseries,
And make him curse the being which thou gav'st?
Is this the blessing of so fond a father?
If careless of Lorenzo, spare, oh! spare
Florello's father, and Philander's friend!
Florello's father ruined, ruins him;
And from Philander's friend the world expects
A conduct no dishonour to the dead.
Let passion do what nobler motive should;
Let love and emulation rise in aid
To reason, and persuade thee to be—blessed.
This seems not a request to be denied;
Yet (such the infatuation of mankind!)
'Tis the most hopeless man can make to man
Shall I then rise in argument and warmth?
And urge Philander's posthumous advice,
From topics yet unbroached?——
But, oh! I faint! my spirits fail! nor strange!
So long on wing, and in no middle clime!
To which my great Creator's glory called;
And calls—but now, in vain. Sleep's dewy wand
Has stroked my drooping lids, and promises
My long arrear of rest: the downy god
(Wont to return with our returning peace)
Will pay, ere long, and bless me with repose.
Haste, haste, sweet stranger! from the peasant's cot,
The shipboy's hammock, or the soldier's straw,
Whence Sorrow never chased thee; with thee bring
Not hideous visions, as of late, but draughts
Delicious of well-tasted cordial rest,
Man's rich restorative; his balmy bath,
That supples, lubricates, and keeps in play
The various movements of this nice machine,
Which asks such frequent periods of repair.
When tired with vain rotations of the day,
Sleep winds us up for the succeeding dawn;
Fresh we spin on, till sickness clogs our wheels,
Or death quite breaks the spring, and motion ends.
When will it end with me?
——'Thou only know'st,
Thou, whose broad eye the future and the past
Joins to the present, making one of three
To mortal thought! Thou know'st, and Thou alone,

All-knowing!—all-unknown!—and yet well known!
Near, though remote! and, though unfathomed, felt!
And, though invisible, for ever seen!
And seen in all, the great and the minute:
Each globe above, with its gigantic race,
Each flower, each leaf, with its small people swarmed,
(Those puny vouchers of Omnipotence!)
To the first thought that asks 'From whence?' declare
Their common source: thou fountain, running o'er
In rivers of communicated joy!
Who gav'st us speech for far, far humbler themes!
Say by what name shall I presume to call
Him I see burning in these countless suns
As Moses in the bush? Illustrious Mind!
The whole creation less, far less, to Thee,
Than that to the creation's ample round,
How shall I name Thee?—How my labouring soul
Heaves underneath the thought, too big for birth!
Great System of perfections! mighty Cause
Of causes mighty! Cause uncaused! sole root
Of Nature, that luxuriant growth of God!
First Father of effects! that progeny
Of endless series; where the golden chain's
Last link admits a period, who can tell?
Father of all that is or heard or hears!
Father of all that is or seen or sees!
Father of all that is or shall arise!
Father of this immeasurable mass
Of matter multiform, or dense or rare,
Opaque or lucid, rapid or at rest,
Minute or passing bound! in each extreme
Of like amaze and mystery to man.
Father of these bright millions of the night!
Of which the least, full Godhead had proclaimed,
And thrown the gazer on his knee—Or, say,
Is appellation higher still thy choice?
Father of matter's temporary lords!
Father of spirits! nobler offspring! sparks
Of high paternal glory, rich endowed
With various measures, and with various modes
Of instinct, reason, intuition; beams
More pale or bright from day divine, to break
The dark of matter organized (the ware
Of all created spirit) beams that rise
Each over other in superior light,
Till the last ripens into lustre strong,
Of next approach to Godhead. Father fond
(Far fonder than ere bore that name on earth)
Of intellectual beings! beings blessed
With powers to please thee, not of passive ply
To laws they know not; beings lodged in seats
Of well-adapted joys, in different domes
Of this imperial palace for thy sons;
Of this proud, populous, well-policied,
Though boundless habitation, planned by Thee;
Whose several clans their several climates suit,
And transposition doubtless, would destroy.
Or, oh! indulge, immortal King! indulge
A title lest august, indeed, but more
Endearing; ah! how sweet in human ears!
Sweet in our ears, and triumph in our hearts!
Father of immortality to man!
A theme that lately* set my soul on fire—
And THOU the next! yet equal! thou by whom
That blessing was conveyed, far more! was bought,
Ineffable the price! by whom all worlds
Were made, and one redeemed! illustrious Light
From light illustrious! thou, whose regal power
Finite in time, but infinite in space
On more than adamantine basis fixed,
O'er more, far more, than diadems and thrones
Inviolably reigns, the dread of gods!
And, oh! the friend of man! beneath whose foot
And by the mandate of whose awful nod,
All regions, revolutions, fortunes, fates,
Of high, of low, of mind, and matter, roll
Through the short channels of expiring time,
Or shoreless ocean of eternity,
Calm or tempestuous (as thy Spirit breathes)
In absolute subjection!—And, O THOU!
The glorious Third! distinct, not separate!
Beaming from both! with both incorporate,
And (strange to tell!) incorporate with dust!
By condescension, as thy glory, great,
Inshrined in man! of human hearts, if pure,
Divine Inhabitant! the tie divine
Of Heaven with distant earth! by whom, I trust,
(If not inspired) uncensured this address
To Thee, to Them—to whom?—mysterious power!
Revealed—yet unrevealed! darkness in light!
Number in unity! our joy! our dread!
The triple bolt that lays all wrong in ruin!
That animates all right, the triple sun!
Sun of the soul! her never-setting sun!
Triune, unutterable, unconceived,
Absconding, yet demonstrable, Great GOD!
Greater than greatest! better than the best!
Kinder than kindest! with soft Pity's eye,
Or (stronger still to speak it) with thine own,
From thy bright home, from that high firmament,
Where thou, from all eternity, hast dwelt;
Beyond archangels' unassisted ken,
From far above what mortals highest call,
From Elevation's pinnacle, look down,
Through—what? confounding interval! through all,
And more, than labouring Fancy can conceive;
Through radiant ranks of essences unknown;
Through hierarchies from hierarchies detached
Round various banners of Omnipotence,

* See Nights the Sixth and Seventh.

With endless change of rapturous duties fired;
Through wondrous beings' interposing swarms,
All clustering at the call, to dwell in thee;
Through this wide waste of worlds! this vista vast,
All sanded o'er with suns, suns turned to night
Before thy feeblest beam—look down—down—
down,
On a poor breathing particle in dust,
Or lower, an immortal in his crimes:
His crimes forgive! forgive his virtues too!
Those smaller faults, half-converts to the right:
Nor let me close these eyes, which never more
May see the sun (though Night's descending scale
Now weighs up Morn) unpitied and unblessed!
In thy displeasure dwells eternal pain;
Pain, our aversion; pain which strikes me now;
And since all pain is terrible to man,
Though transient, terrible; at thy good hour,
Gently, ah, gently, lay me in my bed,
My clay-cold bed! by nature, now, so near;
By nature near, still nearer by disease!
Till then be this an emblem of my grave;
Let it out preach the preacher; every night
Let it outcry the boy at Philip's ear,
That tongue of death! that herald of the tomb!
And when (the shelter of thy wing implored)
My senses, soothed, shall sink in soft repose,
O sink this truth still deeper in my soul,
Suggested by my pillow, signed by Fate,
First in Fate's volume, at the page of Man—
'Man's sickly soul, though turned and tossed for
ever
From side to side, can rest on nought but Thee;
Here in full trust, hereafter in full joy:'
On Thee, the promised, sure, eternal down
Of spirits toiled in travel through this vale:
Nor of that pillow shall my soul despond;
For—Love almighty! Love almighty! (sing,
Exult, Creation!) Love almighty reigns!
That death of death! that cordial of despair
And loud Eternity's triumphant song!
Of whom no more:—for, O thou Patron-God!
Thou God and mortal! thence more God to man!
Man's theme eternal! man's eternal theme!
Thou canst not 'scape uninjured from our praise:
Uninjured from our praise can he escape
Who, disembosomed from the Father, bows
The Heaven of heavens to kiss the distant earth!
Breathes out in agonies a sinless soul!
Against the cross Death's iron sceptre breaks!
From famished Ruin plucks her human prey!
Throws wide the gates celestial to his foes!
Their gratitude, for such a boundless debt,
Deputes their suffering brothers to receive!
And if deep human guilt in payment fails,
As deeper guilt, prohibits our despair!
Enjoys it, as our duty, to rejoice!
And (to close all) omnipotently kind,
Takes his delights among the sons of men.'*
What words are these—and did they come from
Heaven?
And were they spoke to man? to guilty man?
What are all mysteries to love like this?
The songs of angels, all the melodies
Of choral gods, are wafted in the sound
Heal and exhilarate the broken heart,
Though plunged, before, in horrors dark as night:
Rich prelibation of consummate joy!
Nor wait we dissolution to be blessed.
This final effort of the moral Muse,
How justly titled!† nor for me alone;
For all that read. What spirit of support,
What heights of Consolation, crown my song?
Then farewell Night! of darkness, now, no
more;
Joy breaks, shines, triumphs; 'tis eternal day!
Shall that which rises out of nought complain
Of a few evils, paid with endless joys?
My soul! henceforth, in sweetest union join
The two supports of human happiness,
Which some, erroneous, think can never meet,
True taste of life, and constant thought of death!
The thought of death, sole victor of its dread!
Hope be thy joy, and probity thy skill;
Thy patron HE whose diadem has dropped
Yon gems of Heaven, eternity thy prize;
And leave the racers of the world their own,
Their feather and their froth, for endless toils:
They part with all, for that which is not bread;
They mortify, they starve, on wealth, fame, power,
And laugh to scorn the fools that aim at more.
How must a spirit, late escaped from earth,
Suppose Philander's, Lucia's, or Narcissa's,
The truth of things new blazing in its eye,
Look back astonished on the ways of men,
Whose lives' whole drift is to forget their graves!
And when our present privilege is past,
To scourge us with due sense of its abuse,
The same astonishment will seize us all.
What then must pain us, would preserve us now.
Lorenzo! 'tis not yet too late. Lorenzo!
Seize wisdom, ere 'tis torment to be wise;
That is, seize wisdom ere she seizes thee.
For what, my small philosopher! is hell?
'Tis nothing but full knowledge of the truth,
When Truth, resisted long, is sworn our foe,
And calls Eternity to do her right.
Thus darkness aiding intellectual light,
And sacred Silence whispering truths divine,
And truths divine converting pain to peace,
My song the midnight raven has outwinged,
And shot, ambitious of unbounded scenes,
Beyond the flaming limits of the world
Her gloomy flight. But what avails the flight

* Prov. chap. viii. † The Consolation

Of Fancy, when our hearts remain below?
Virtue abounds in flatterers and foes;
'Tis pride to praise her, penance to perform.
To more than words, to more than worth of tongue,
Lorenzo! rise, at this auspicious hour,
An hour when Heaven's most intimate with man;
When, like a falling star, the ray divine
Glides swift into the bosom of the just;
And just are all, determined to reclaim;
Which sets that title high within thy reach.
Awake, then; thy Philander calls: awake!
Thou, who shalt wake when the Creation sleeps
When like a taper, all these suns expire;
When Time, like him of Gaza in his wrath,
In Nature's ample ruins lies entombed,
And midnight, universal midnight! reigns.

The Last Day.

A POEM.

IN THREE BOOKS.

Venit summa dies.—*Virg.*

DEDICATION TO THE QUEEN.

MADAM,

My only title to the great honour I now do myself, is the obligation I have formerly received from your royal indulgence; which I remember with the utmost gratitude. I was indeed uneasy, till I had bethought myself of some means of relieving my heart by expressing its acknowledgments: my inclination carried me to poetry; your virtues determined me to sacred poetry above all other; and in that kind there is no subject more exalted and affecting than this which I have chosen: its very first mention snatches away the soul to the borders of eternity, surrounds it with wonders, opens to it on every hand the most surprising scenes of awe and astonishment, and terminates its view with nothing less than the fulness of glory, and the throne of God.

But this may seem a very improper season for any thing of so grave and solemn a nature to present itself before you, and mingle with the gaiety and splendour of universal joy and thanksgiving: yet if we consider that the thoughts which you will meet in the following pages are such as are ever uppermost in your own heart; and that, in all probability, those great blessings which your people now enjoy, are the reward of that religious bent of mind and virtuous disposition in their Prince; I hope that may seem less foreign and unseasonable, which is the root of the felicity now flourishing amongst us, and shedding its ripened fruits on our land.

They are strangers to your Majesty, who think, when they write to the British throne, that victories and triumphs must be their constant theme; they know not there is something you hold much dearer than either your fortune or your glory: they have not attended to your unbounded charities; ev have not heard of your roval care and generosity to those who serve at the holy altar; they never sufficiently admired your resolution of building magnificently to the LORD, and setting wide the gates of salvation: in a word, they are still to be informed, that prudent counsels and successful arms, well-ordered states, and humbled foes, are only the second glories of your most illustrious reign.

It is, Madam, a prospect truly great to behold you seated on your throne, surrounded with your faithful counsellors and mighty men of war, issuing forth commands to your own people, or giving audience to the great princes and powerful rulers of the earth: but why should we confine your glory here? I am pleased to see you rise from this lower world, soaring above the clouds, passing the first and second heavens, leaving the fixed stars behind you; nor will I lose you there, but keep you still in view through the boundless spaces on the other side of creation, in your journey towards eternal bliss; till I behold the Heaven of heavens open, and angels receiving and conveying you still onward from the stretch of my imagination, which tires in her pursuit, and falls back again to the earth.

What a panegyric is it on human nature to consider that it shall come to pass in some future time, through which the thread of your existence shall run, that you yourself may forget this *glorious year*,* or make its remembrance only serve by comparison to recommend superior honours, and more splendid renown? Let us tremble at the power of GOD, and adore the profusion of his goodness on us his creatures! we behold thee, O Queen! great in peace and war, great in thy alliance, greater in thyself! We see thee blessing thy people, and composing the strifes of Europe; we survey thee

* The year 1713, when the peace of Utrecht was concluded

in this full light, this blaze of sublunary greatness, and own thy glory is not yet begun.

Such thoughts might appear too warm and affected on another occasion; but they are so natural to him who presents such a theme to such a Queen, that they are not without violence to be suppressed. When at your royal leisure you turn over the following sheets, if you find any thing that encourages virtue, or disheartens vice, let it intercede for pardon of my many defects and errors.

That your reign may be as pious as it is glorious, and give posterity as many instances of exemplary virtue and religion, as it will of eminent talents and extraordinary capacities; that it may not only shine in history and be great in the annals of the earth, but also be set down in the observation of angels, and with distinguished characters be written in the book of life, to give joy at the GREAT DAY; is the constant prayer of him who is (as most particularly obliged to be)

Your Majesty's
Most humble
And most obedient Servant,
EDWARD YOUNG.

BOOK I.

Ipse pater, media nimborum in nocte, corusca
Fulmina molitur dextra. Quo maxima motu
Terra tremit: fugere feræ; et mortalia corda
Per gentes humilis stravit pavor. — *Virg.*

WHILE others sing the fortune of the great,
Empire and arms, and all the pomp of state,
With Britain's hero* set their souls on fire,
And grow immortal as his deeds inspire,
I draw a deeper scene; a scene that yields
A louder trumpet, and more dreadful fields;
The world alarmed, both earth and heaven o'erthrown,
And gasping Nature's last tremendous groan;
Death's ancient sceptre broke, the teeming tomb,
The righteous Judge, and man's eternal doom!
'Twixt joy and pain I view the bold design,
And ask my anxious heart if it be mine?
Whatever great or dreadful has been done
Within the sight of conscious stars or sun,
Is far beneath my daring; I look down
On all the splendours of the British crown.
This globe is for my verse a narrow bound;
Attend me, all ye glorious worlds around!
O all ye angels, howsoe'er disjoined,
Of every various order, place, and kind,
Hear, and assist a feeble mortal's lays;
'Tis your eternal King I strive to praise.

But chiefly thou, great ruler! Lord of all!
Before whose throne archangels prostrate fall;
If at thy nod, from discord and from night,
Sprang beauty, and yon sparkling worlds of light.
Exalt e'en me; all inward tumults quell;
The clouds and darkness of my mind dispel;
To my great subject thou my breast inspire,
And raise my labouring soul with equal fire.

Man! bear thy brow aloft, view every grace
In GOD'S great offspring, beauteous Nature's face;
See Spring's gay bloom, see golden Autumn's store,
See how Earth smiles, and hear old Ocean roar.
Leviathans but heave their cumbrous mail,
It makes a tide, and wind-bound navies sail.
Here forests rise, the mountains awful pride;
Here rivers measure climes, and worlds divide:
There vallies, fraught with gold's resplendent seeds,
Holds kings' and kingdoms' fortunes in their beds:
There to the skies aspiring hills ascend,
And into distant lands their shades extend.
View cities, armies, fleets; of fleets the pride,
See Europe's law in Albion's channel ride.
View the whole earth's vast landscape, unconfined,
Or view in Britain all her glories joined.

Then let the firmament thy wonder raise;
'Twill raise thy wonder, but transcend thy praise.
How far from east to west? the labouring eye
Can scarce the distant azure bounds descry:
Wide theatre! where tempests play at large,
And God's right hand can all its wrath discharge.
Mark how those radiant lamps inflame the pole,
Call forth the seasons, and the year control:
They shine through time with an unaltered ray,
See this grand period rise, and that decay:
So vast, this world's a grain; yet myriads grace,
With golden pomp, the thronged ethereal space;
So bright, with such a wealth of glory stored,
'Twere sin Heathens not to have adored.

*How great, how firm, how sacred, all appears
How worthy an immortal round of years!
Yet all must drop, as autumn's sickliest grain,
And earth and firmament be sought in vain:
The tract forgot where constellations shone,
Or where the Stuarts filled an awful throne.
Time shall be slain, all nature be destroyed,
Nor leave an atom in the mighty void.

Sooner or later, in some future date,
(A dreadful secret in the book of fate!)
This hour, for aught all human wisdom knows,
Or when ten thousand harvests more have rose;
When scenes are changed on this revolving earth,
Old empires fall, and give new empires birth,
While other Bourbons rule in other lands,
And (if man's sin forbids not) other Annes,
While the still busy world is treading o'er
The paths they trode five thousand years before,
Thoughtless as those who now life's mazes run,
Of earth dissolved, or an extinguished sun;

* The Duke of Marlborough.

Ye sublunary worlds! awake, awake!
Ye rulers of the nations! hear, and shake!
Thick clouds of darkness shall arise on day,
In sudden night all earth's dominions lay,
Impetuous winds the scattered forests rend,
Eternal mountains, like their cedars, bend;
The valleys yawn, the troubled ocean roar,
And break the bondage of his wonted shore;
A sanguine stain the silver moon o'erspread,
Darkness the circle of the sun invade;
From inmost heaven incessant thunders roll,
And the strong echo bound from pole to pole.
When, lo! a mighty trump, one half concealed
In clouds, one half to mortal eye revealed,
Shall pour a dreadful note; the piercing call
Shall rattle in the centre of the ball;
The extended circuit of creation shake,
The living die with fear, the dead awake.
Oh, powerful blast! to which no equal sound
Did e'er the frighted ear of Nature wound,
Though rival clarions have been strained on high,
And kindled wars immortal through the sky;
Though God's whole enginery discharged, and all
The rebel angels bellowed in their fall.
Have angels sinned? and shall not man beware?
How shall a son of earth decline the snare?
Not folded arms, and slackness of the mind,
Can promise for the safety of mankind,
None are supinely good; through care and pain,
And various arts, the steep ascent we gain.
This is the scene of combat, not of rest;
Man's is laborious happiness at best:
On this side death his dangers never cease;
His joys are joys of conquest, not of peace.
If then, obsequious to the will of Fate,
And bending to the terms of human state,
When guilty joys invite us to their arms,
When Beauty smiles, or Grandeur spreads her charms,
The conscious soul would this great scene display,
Call down the immortal hosts in dread array,
The trumpet sound, the Christian banner spread,
And raise from silent graves the trembling dead;
Such deep impression would the picture make,
No power on earth her firm resolve could shake;
Engaged with angels she would greatly stand,
And look regardless down on sea and land:
Not proffered worlds her ardour could restrain,
And Death might shake his threatening lance in vain.
Her certain conquest would endear the fight,
And danger serve but to exalt delight.
Instructed thus to shun the fatal spring
Whence flow the terrors of that day I sing,
More boldly we our labours may pursue,
And all the dreadful image set to view.
The sparkling eye, the sleek and painted breast,
The burnished scale, curled train, and rising crest,
All that is lovely in the noxious snake,
Provokes our fear, and bids us flee the brake
The sting once drawn, his guiltless beauties rise
In pleasing lustre, and detain our eyes;
We view with joy what once did horror move,
And strong aversion softens into love.
Say then, my muse, whom dismal scenes delight,
Frequent at tombs, and in the realms of night;
Say, melancholy maid! if bold to dare,
The last extremes of terror and despair,
Oh say what change on earth, what heart in man,
This blackest moment since the world began.
Ah mournful turn! the blissful earth, who late
At leisure on her axle rolled in state,
While thousand golden planets knew no rest,
Still onward in their circling journey pressed;
A grateful change of seasons some to bring,
And sweet vicissitude of fall and spring;
Some through vast oceans to conduct the keel,
And some those wat'ry worlds to sink or swell:
Around her some their splendours to display,
And gild her globe with tributary day:
This world so great, of joy the bright abode,
Heaven's darling child, and favourite of her God,
Now looks an exile from her Father's care,
Delivered o'er to darkness and despair.
No sun in radiant glory shines on high,
No light, but from the terrors of the sky;
Fallen are her mountains, her famed rivers lost,
And all into a second chaos tossed:
One universal ruin spreads abroad;
Nothing is safe beneath the throne of God.
Such, Earth! thy fate: what then canst thou afford
To comfort and support thy guilty lord?
Man, haughty lord of all beneath the moon,
How must he bend his soul's ambition down?
Prostrate, the reptile own, and disavow
His boasted stature, and assuming brow?
Claim kindred with the clay, and curse his form,
That speaks distinction from his sister worm?
What dreadful pangs the trembling heart invade?
Lord! why dost thou forsake whom thou hast made?
Who can sustain thy anger? who can stand
Beneath the terrors of thy lifted hand?
It flies the reach of thought: oh, save me, Power
Of powers supreme, in that tremendous hour!
Thou who beneath the frown of Fate hast stood,
And in thy dreadful agony sweat blood;
Thou who for me, through every throbbing vein,
Hast felt the keenest edge of mortal pain;
Whom Death led captive through the realms below,
And taught those horrid mysteries of wo;
Defend me, O my God! oh, save me, Power
Of powers supreme, in that tremendous hour!

From east to west they fly, from pole to line,
Imploring shelter from the wrath divine;
Beg flames to wrap, or whelming seas to sweep,
Or rocks to yawn, compassionately deep:
Seas cast the monster forth to meet his doom,
And rocks but prison up for wrath to come.
So fares a traitor to an earthly crown,
While Death sits threatening in his prince's frown,
His heart's dismayed; and now his fears command
To change his native for a distant land:
Swift orders fly, the king's severe decree
Stands in the channel, and locks up the sea;
The port he seeks obedient to her lord,
Hurls back the rebel to his lifted sword.
But why this idle toil to paint that day?
This time elaborately thrown away?
Words all in vain pant after the distress,
The height of eloquence would make it less.
Heavens! how the good man trembles!—
And is there a Last Day? and must there come
A sure, a fixed, inexorable doom?
Ambition! swell; and, thy proud sails to show,
Take all the winds that Vanity can blow;
Wealth! on a golden mountain blazing stand,
And reach an India forth in either hand;
Spread all thy purple clusters, tempting Vine!
And thou, more dreaded foe, bright Beauty shine:
Shine all, in all your charms together rise,
That all, in all you charms, I may despise,
While I mount upward on a strong desire,
Borne, like Elijah, on a car of fire.
In hopes of glory to be quite involved!
To smile at death! to long to be dissolved!
From our decays a pleasure to receive!
And kindle into transport at a grave!
What equals this? and shall the Victor now
Boast the proud laurels on his loaded brow?
Religion! oh thou cherub, heavenly bright!
Oh joys unmixed, and fathomless delight!
Thou, thou art all; nor find I in the whole
Creation aught but God and my own soul.
For ever, then, my soul! thy God adore,
Nor let the brute creation praise him more.
Shall things inanimate my conduct blame,
And flush my conscious cheek with spreading shame?
They all for him pursue, or quit, their end;
The mounting flames their burning power suspend;
In solid heaps the unfrozen billows stand,
To rest and silence awed by his command:
Nay, the dire monsters that infest the flood,
By nature dreadful, and athirst for blood,
His will can calm, their savage tempers bind,
And turn to mild protectors of mankind.
Did not the prophet this great truth maintain
In the deep chambers of the gloomy main,
When darkness round him all her horrors spread,
And the loud ocean bellowed o'er his head?
When now the thunders roar, the lightning flies,
And all the warring winds tumultuous rise;
When now the foaming surges tossed on high,
Disclose the sands beneath, and touch the sky;
When death draws near, the mariners aghast
Look back with terror on their actions past,
Their courage sickens into deep dismay,
Their hearts, through fear and anguish, melt away;
Nor tears, nor prayers, the tempest can appease;
Now they devote their treasure to the seas;
Unload their shattered bark, though richly fraught,
And think the hopes of life are cheaply bought
With gems and gold; but, oh, the storm so high!
Nor gems not gold the hopes of life can buy.
The trembling prophet then, themselves to save,
They headlong plunge into the briny wave;
Down he descends, and, booming o'er his head
The billows close; he's numbered with the dead.
(Hear, O ye just! attend ye virtuous few!
And the bright paths of piety pursue)
Lo! the great Ruler of the world, from high,
Looks smiling down with a propitious eye,
Covers his servant with his gracious hand,
And bids tempestuous Nature silent stand;
Commands the peaceful waters to give place,
Or kindly fold him in a soft embrace;
He bridles in the monsters of the deep;
The bridled monsters awful distance keep:
Forget their hunger while they view their prey,
And guiltless gaze, and round the stranger play.
But still arise new wonders: Nature's Lord
Sends forth into the deep his powerful word,
And calls the great leviathan; the great
Leviathan attends in all his state,
Exults for joy, and, with a mighty bound,
Makes the sea shake, and heaven and earth resound,
Blackens the waters with the rising sand,
And drives vast billows to the distant land.
As yawns an earthquake, when imprisoned air
Struggles for vent, and lays the centre bare,
The whale expands his jaws enormous size,
The prophet views the cavern with surprise,
Measures his monstrous teeth, afar descried,
And rolls his wondering eyes from side to side;
Then takes possession of the spacious seat,
And sails secure within the dark retreat.
Now is he pleased the northern blast to hear,
And hangs on liquid mountains void of fear,
Or falls, immersed, into the depths below,
Where the dead silent waters never flow;
To the foundations of the hills conveyed,
Dwells in the shelving mountain's dreadful shade:
Where plummet never reached he draws his breath,
And glides serenely through the paths of death.
Two wondrous days and nights through coral groves,
Through labyrinths of rocks and sands he roves;

When the third morning with its level rays,
The mountains gilds, and on the billows plays,
It sees the king of waters rise and pour
His sacred guest uninjured on the shore;
A type of that great blessing which the Muse
In her next labour ardently pursues.

BOOK II.

———Ἐκ γαιης ἐλπιζομεν ἐς φαος ἐλθειν.
Αιψαν ἀποιχομενων οπισω δι Θεοι τελεθουσι.
PHOCYL.

i. e.
We hope that the departed will rise again from the dust; after which, like the gods, they will be immortal.

Now man awakes, and from his silent bed,
Where he has slept for ages, lifts his head,
Shakes off the slumber often thousand years,
And on the borders of new worlds appears.
Whate'er the bold, the rash adventure cost,
In wide eternity I dare be lost.
The Muse is wont in narrow bounds to sing,
To teach the swain, or celebrate the king:
I grasp the whole; no more to parts confined,
I lift my voice, and sing to human kind:
I sing to men and angels; angels join,
While such the theme, their sacred songs with mine.
Again the trumpet's intermitted sound
Rolls the wide circuit of creation round,
A universal concourse to prepare
Of all that ever breathed the vital air;
In some wide field, which active whirlwinds sweep,
Drive cities, forests, mountains to the deep,
To smooth and lengthen out the unbounded space,
And spread an area for all human race.
Now monuments prove faithful to their trust,
And render back their long committed dust!
Now charnels rattle; scattered limbs and all
The various bones, obsequious to the call,
Self-moved, advance; the neck, perhaps, to meet
The distant head; the distant legs the feet.
Dreadful to view, see through the dusky sky
Fragments of bodies in confusion fly,
To distant regions journeying, there to claim
Deserted members, and complete the frame.
When the world bowed to Rome's almighty sword,
Rome bowed to Pompey, and confesssed her lord:
Yet one day lost, this deity below
Became the scorn and pity of his foe;
His blood a traitor's sacrifice was made,
And smoked indignant on a ruffian's blade:
No trumpet's sound, no gasping army's yell,
Bid, with due horror, his great soul farewell:
Obscure his fall! all weltering in his gore,
His trunk was cast to perish on the shore!
While Julius frowned the bloody monster dead,
Who brought the world in his great rival's head.
This severed head and trunk shall join once more
Though realms now rise between and oceans roar
The trumpet's sound each vagrant mote shall hear
Or fixed in earth, or in afloat in air,
Obey the signal wafted in the wind,
And not one sleeping atom lay behind.
So swarming bees that on a summer's day
In airy rings and wild meanders play,
Charmed with the brazen sound, their wanderings end,
And, gently circling, on a bough descend.
The body thus renewed, the conscious soul,
Which has perhaps been fluttering near the pole,
Or midst the burning planets wondering strayed,
Or hovered o'er where her pale corpse was laid,
Or rather coasted on her final state,
And feared, or wished for her appointed fate;
This soul, returning with a constant flame,
Now weds for ever her immortal frame:
Life, which ran down before, so high is wound,
The springs maintain an everlasting round.
Thus a frail model of the work designed
First takes a copy of the builder's mind;
Before the structure firm, with lasting oak,
And marble bowels of the solid rock,
Turns the strong arch, and bids the columns rise,
And bear the lofty palace to the skies;
The wrongs of time enabled to surpass,
With bars of adamant and ribs of brass.
That ancient, sacred, and illustrious dome,*
Where soon or late fair Albion's heroes come
From camps and courts, though great, or wise, or just,
To feed the worm, and moulder into dust;
That solemn mansion of the royal dead,
Where passing slaves o'er sleeping monarchs tread,
Now populous o'erflows; a numerous race
Of rising kings fill all the extended space:
A life well spent, not the victorious sword,
Awards the crown, and styles the greater lord.
Nor monuments alone, and burial earth,
Labours with man to this his second birth;
But where gay palaces in pomp arise,
And gilded theatres invade the skies,
Nations shall wake, whose unrespected bones
Support the pride of their luxurious sons.
The most magnificent and costly dome
Is but an upper chamber to a tomb.
No spot on earth but has supplied a grave,
And human skulls the spacious ocean pave:
All's full of man; and at this dreadful turn
The swarm shall issue, and the hive shall burn.
Not all at once, nor in like manner, rise:
Some lift with pain their slow unwilling eyes,

* Westminster Abbey

Shrink backward from the terror of the light,
And bless the grave, and call for lasting night;
Others, whose long-attempted virtue stood
Fixed as a rock, and broke the rushing flood,
Whose firm resolve nor beauty could melt down,
Nor raging tyrants from their posture frown;
Such, in this day of horrors, shall be seen
To face the thunders with a godlike mien.
The planets drop, their thoughts are fixed above;
The centre shakes, their hearts disdain to move.
An earth dissolving, and a Heaven thrown wide,
A yawning gulf, and fiends on every side,
Serene they view, impatient of delay,
And bless the dawn of everlasting day.
Here Greatness prostrate falls; their Strength gives place,
Here lazars smile; their Beauty hides her face.
Christians and Jews, and Turks, and Pagans stand,
A blended throng, one undistinguished band.
Some who, perhaps, by mutual wounds expired,
With zeal for their distinct persuasions fired,
In mutual friendship their long slumber break,
And hand in hand their Saviour's love partake.
But none are flushed with brighter joy, or, warm
With juster confidence, enjoy the storm,
Than those whose pious bounties, unconfined,
Have made them public fathers of mankind.
In that illustrious rank what shining light
With such distinguished glory fills my sight?
Bend down, my grateful muse; that homage show,
Which to such worthies thou art proud to owe.
Wickham! Fox! Chichely!* hail, illustrious names!
Who to far distant times dispense your beams;
Beneath your shades, and near your crystal springs,
I first presumed to touch the trembling strings:
All hail, thrice honoured, 'twas your great renown
To bless a people, and oblige a crown;
And now you rise, eternally to shine,
Eternally to drink the rays divine.
Indulgent God! oh, how shall mortal raise
His soul to due returns of grateful praise
For bounty so profuse to human kind,
Thy wondrous gift of an eternal mind?
Shall I, who some few years ago, was less
Than worm, or mite, or shadow can express,
Was nothing; shall I live, when every fire
Of every star shall languish and expire?
When earth's no more, shall I survive above,
And through the radiant files of angels move?
Or, as before the throne of God I stand,
See new worlds rolling from his spacious hand,
Where our adventures shall perhaps be taught,
As we now tell how Michael sung or fought?
All that has being in full consort join,
And celebrate the depths of love divine.

But, oh, before this blissful state, before
The aspiring soul this wondrous height can soar,
The Judge, descending, thunders from afar,
And all mankind is summoned to the bar.
This mighty scene I next presume to draw;
Attend, great Anna, with religious awe:
Expect not here the known successful arts
To win attention, and command our hearts.
Fiction! be far away; let no machine,
Descending here, no fabled god, be seen;
Behold the God of gods indeed descend,
And worlds unnumbered his approach attend.
Lo, the wide theatre, whose ample space
Must entertain the whole of human race,
At Heaven's all powerful edict is prepared,
And fenced around with an immortal guard.
Tribes, provinces, dominions, worlds o'erflow
The mighty plain, and deluge all below,
And every age and nation pours along;
Nimrod and Bourbon mingle in the throng;
Adam salutes his youngest son: no sign
Of all those ages which their births disjoin.
How empty learning, and how vain is art,
But as it mends the life, and guides the heart:
What volumes have been swelled, what time been spent,
To fix a hero's birth-day or descent.
What joy must it now yield, what rapture raise,
To see the glorious race of ancient days—
To greet those worthies who perhaps have stood
Illustrious on record before the flood:
Alas, a nearer care your soul demands;
Cæsar unnoted in your presence stands.
How vast the concourse! not in number more
The waves that break on the resounding shore,
The leaves that tremble in the shady grove,
The lamps that gild the spangled vaults above;
Those overwhelming armies, whose command
Said to one empire *fall*—another, *stand*;
Whose rear lay wrapt in night, while breaking dawn
Roused the broad front, and called the battle on;
Great Xerxes' world in arms, proud Cannæ's field,
Where Carthage taught victorious Rome to yield,
(Another blow had broke the Fates' decree,
And earth had wanted her fourth monarchy)
Immortal Blenheim, famed Ramillia's host;
They all are here, and here they all are lost;
Their millions swell to be discerned in vain,
Lost as a billow in th' unbounded main.
This echoing voice now rends the yielding air:
'For judgment, judgment, sons of men: prepare!'
Earth shakes anew, I hear her groans profound,
And Hell through all her trembling realms resound.
Whoe'er thou art, thou greatest power of earth,
Blessed with most equal planets at thy birth,
Whose valour drew the most successful sword,
Most realms united in one common lord,

* Founders of New College, Corpus Christi and All Souls, in Oxford; of all which the Author was a member.

Who on the day of triumph, saidst, 'Be thine
The skies, Jehovah; all this world is mine;'
Dare not to lift thine eye.—Alas! my muse!
How art thou lost? what numbers canst thou choose?
A sudden blush inflames the waving sky,
And now the crimson curtains open fly;
Lo! far within, and far above all height,
Where Heaven's great Sovereign reigns in worlds of light,
Whence Nature he informs, and with one ray,
Shot from his eye, does all her works survey,
Creates, supports, confounds! where time and place,
Matter, and form, and fortune, life, and grace,
Wait humbly at the footstool of their God,
And move obedient at his awful nod;
Whence he beholds us vagrant emmets crawl
At random on this air-suspended ball,
(Speck of creation) if he pour one breath,
'The bubble breaks, and 'tis eternal death.
Thence issuing I behold, (but mortal sight
Sustains not such a rushing sea of light)
I see on an empyreal flying throne
Sublimely raised, Heaven's everlasting Son,
Crowned with that majesty which formed the world,
And the grand rebel flaming downward hurled;
Virtue, Dominion, Praise, Omnipotence,
Support the train of their triumphant Prince,
A zone, beyond the thought of angels bright,
Around him, like the zodiac, winds its light;
Night shades the solemn arches of his brows,
And in his cheek the purple morning glows.
Where'er, serene, he turns propitious eyes,
Or we expect, or find, a paradise;
But if resentment reddens their mild beams,
The Eden kindles, and the world's in flames.
On one hand Knowledge shines in purest light;
On one, the sword of Justice, fiercely bright.
Now bend the knee in sport, present the reed:
Now tell the scourged Impostor he shall bleed!
Thus glorious through the courts of Heaven, the Source
Of life and death eternal bends his course;
Loud thunders round him roll, and lightnings play;
Th' angelic host is ranged in bright array:
Some touch the string, some strike the sounding shell,
And mingling voices in rich concert swell;
Voices seraphic! blessed with such a strain,
Could Satan hear, he were a god again.
Triumphant King of glory! Soul of bliss!
What a stupendous turn of fate is this!
Oh! whither art thou raised above the scorn
And indigence of him in Bethlehem born;
A needless, helpless, unaccounted guest,
And but a second to the foddered beast?
How changed from him who, meekly prostrate laid,
Vouchsafed to wash the feet himself had made?
From him who was betrayed, forsook, denied,
Wept, languished, prayed, bled, thirsted, groaned, and died?
Hung pierced and bare, insulted by the foe,
All Heaven in tears above, earth unconcerned below?
And was 't enough to bid the sun retire?
Why did not Nature at thy groan expire?
I see, I hear, I feel, the pangs divine;
The world is vanished,—I am wholly thine.
Mistaken Caiaphas! 'ah, which blasphemed,
Thou or thy prisoner: which shall be condemned?
Well might'st thou rend thy garments, well exclaim,
Deep are the horrors of eternal flame!
But God is good! 'tis wondrous all! e'en He
Thou gav'st to death, shame, torture, died for thee.
Now the descending triumph stops its flight,
From earth full twice a planetary height;
There all the clouds condensed, two columns raise,
Distinct with orient veins and golden blaze;
One fixed on earth, and one in sea, and round
Its ample foot the swelling billows sound:
These an immeasurable arch support,
The grand tribunal of this awful court:
Sheets of bright azure, from the purest sky,
Stream from the crystal arch, and round the columns fly:
Death, wrapt in chains, low at the basis lies,
And on the point of his own arrow dies.
Here high enthroned th' eternal Judge is placed,
With all the grandeur of his godhead graced;
Stars on his robes in beauteous order meet,
And the sun burns beneath his awful feet.
Now an archangel, eminently bright,
From off his silver staff, of wondrous height,
Unfurls the Christian flag, which waving flies,
And shuts and opens more than half the skies:
The Cross so strong a red, it sheds a stain
Where'er it floats, on earth, and air, and main;
Flushes the hill, and sets on fire the wood,
And turns the deep-dyed ocean into blood.
O formidable glory! dreadful bright!
Refulgent torture to the guilty sight.
Ah turn, unwary muse! nor dare reveal
What horrid thoughts with the polluted dwell.
Say not, (to make the sun shrink in his beam)
Dare not affirm they wish it all a dream;
Wish or their souls may wish their limbs decay,
Or God be spoiled of his eternal sway:
But rather, if thou know'st the means, unfold
How they with transport might the scene behold.
Ah how! but by repentance, by a mind
Quick, and severe, its own offence to find?
By tears, and groans, and never-ceasing care,
And all the pious violence of prayer?
Thus then, with fervency, till now unknown,
I cast my heart before th' eternal throne,

In this great temple, which the skies surround
For homage to its Lord a narrow bound.
'O Thou! whose balance doth the mountains weigh,
Whose will the wild tumultuous seas obey,
Whose breath can turn those wat'ry worlds to flame,
That flame to tempest, and that tempest tame;
Earth's meanest son, all trembling, prostrate falls,
And on the boundless of thy goodness calls.
'Oh! give the winds all past offence to sweep,
To scatter wide, or bury in the deep:
Thy power, my weakness, may I ever see,
And wholly dedicate my soul to thee:
Reign o'er my will; my passions ebb and flow
At thy command, nor human motive know!
If anger boil, let anger be my praise,
And sin the graceful indignation raise:
My love be warm to succour the distressed,
And lift the burden from the soul oppressed.
'Oh may my understanding ever read
This glorious volume which thy wisdom made!
Who decks the maiden Spring with flowery pride?
Who calls forth Summer, like a sparkling bride?
Who joys the mother Autumn's bed to crown?
And bids old Winter lay her honours down?
Not the great Ottoman, or greater Czar,
Not Europe's arbitress of peace and war.
May sea, and land, and earth, and heaven, be joined,
To bring the eternal Author to my mind!
When oceans roar, or awful thunders roll,
May thoughts of thy dread vengeance shake my soul;
When earth's in bloom, or planets proudly shine,
Adore, my heart, the majesty Divine!
'Through every scene of life, or peace or war,
Plenty or want, thy glory be my care!
Shine we in arms? or sing beneath our vine?
Thine is the vintage, and the conquest thine:
Thy pleasure points the shaft, and bends the bow,
The cluster blasts, or bids it brightly glow:
'Tis thou that lead'st our powerful armies forth,
And giv'st great Anne thy sceptre o'er the North.
'Grant I may ever, at the morning ray,
Open with prayer the consecrated day;
Tune thy great praise, and bid my soul arise,
And with the mounting sun ascend the skies;
As that advances, let my zeal improve,
And glow with ardour of consummate love;
Nor cease at eve, but with the setting sun
My endless worship shall be still begun.
And, oh! permit the gloom of solemn Night
To sacred thought may forcibly invite.
When this world's shut, and awful planets rise;
Call on our minds, and raise them to the skies;
Compose our souls with a less dazzling sight,
And show all nature in a milder light;
How every boist'rous thought in calms subsides!
How the smoothed spirit into goodness glides!
Oh how divine! to dread the milky way
To the bright palace of the Lord of day;
His court admire, or for his favour sue,
Or leagues of friendship with his saints renew;
Pleased to look down, and see the world asleep,
While I long vigils to its founder keep!
'Can'st thou not shake the centre? Oh, control,
Subdue by force, the rebel in my soul.
Thou who can'st still the raging of the flood,
Restrain the various tumults of my blood:
Teach me, with equal firmness, to sustain
Alluring pleasure, and assaulting pain.
Oh may I pant for thee in each desire!
And with strong faith foment the holy fire!
Stretch out my soul in hope, and grasp the prize
Which in Eternity's deep bosom lies!
At the great day of recompense behold,
Devoid of fear, the fatal book unfold!
Then wafted upward to the blissful seat,
From age to age my grateful song repeat;
My light, my life, my God, my Saviour, see,
And rival angels in the praise of thee!'

BOOK III.

Esse quoque in fatis reminiscitur, affore tempus,
Quo mare, quo tellus, correptaque regia cœli
Ardeat; et mundi moles operosa laboret.
Ovid Met.

The book unfolding, the resplendent seat
Of saints and angels, the tremendous fate
Of guilty souls, the gloomy realms of wo,
And all the horrors of the world below,
I next presume to sing. What yet remains
Demands my last, but most exalted strains;
And let the muse or now affect the sky,
Or in inglorious shades for ever lie.
She kindles; she's inflamed, so near the goal;
She mounts; she gains upon the starry pole;
The world grows less as she pursues her flight,
And the sun darkens to her distant sight,
Heaven opening, all its sacred pomp displays,
And overwhelms her with the rushing blaze!
The triumph rings! archangels shout around!
And echoing Nature lengthens out the sound!
Then thousand trumpets now at once advance;
Now deepest silence lulls the vast expanse:
So deep the silence, and so strong the blast,
As Nature died, when she had groaned her last
Nor man nor angel moves; the Judge on high
Looks round, and with his glory fills the sky,
Then on the fatal book his hand he lays,
Which high to view supporting seraphs raise,
In solemn form the rituals are prepared,
The seal is broken, and a groan is heard.
And thou, my soul! (oh, fall to sudden prayer,
And let the thought sink deep!) shalt thou be there?

See on the left (for by the great command
The throng divided falls on either hand)
How weak, how pale, how haggard, how obscene,
What more than death in every face and mien?
With what distress, and glarings of affright,
They shock the heart, and turn away the sight?
In gloomy orbs their trembling eyeballs roll,
And tell the horrid secrets of the soul:
Each gesture mourns, each look is black with care,
And every groan is laden with despair.
Reader! if guilty, spare the muse, and find
A truer image pictured in thy mind.
Should'st thou behold thy brother, father, wife,
And all the soft companions of thy life,
Whose blended interests leveled at one aim,
Whose mixed desires sent up one common flame,
Divided far, thy wretched self alone
Cast on the left of all whom thou hast known,
How would it wound? what millions would'st thou give
For one more trial, one day more to live?
Flung back in time an hour, a moment's space,
To grasp with eagerness the means of grace,
Contend for mercy with a pious rage,
And in that moment to redeem an age?
Drive back the tide, suspend a storm in air,
Arrest the sun, but still of this despair.
Mark, on the right, how amiable a grace!
Their Maker's image fresh in every face!
What purple bloom my ravished soul admires,
And their eyes sparkling with immortal fires!
Triumphant Beauty! charms that rise above
This world, and in blessed angels kindle love!
To the great Judge with holy pride they turn,
And dare behold the Almighty's anger burn,
Its flash sustain, against its terror rise,
And on the dread tribunal fix their eyes,
Are these the forms that mouldered in the dust?
Oh, the transcendent glory of the just!
Yet still some thin remains of fear and doubt
The infected brightness of their joy pollute.
Thus the chaste bridegroom, when the priest draws nigh,
Beholds his blessing with a trembling eye,
Feels doubtful passions throb in every vein,
And in his cheeks are mingled joy and pain,
Lest still some intervening chance should rise,
Leap forth at once, and snatch the golden prize,
Inflame his wo, by bringing it so late,
And stab him in the crisis of his fate.
Since Adam's family, from first to last,
Now into one distinct survey is cast,
Look round, vain-glorious Muse! and you whoe'er
Devote yourselves to Fame, and think her fair,
Look round, and seek the lights of human race,
Whose shining acts Time's brightest annals grace;
Who founded seats, crowns conquered or resigned;
Gave names to nations, or famed empires joined;
Who raised the vale, and laid the mountain low
And taught obedient rivers where to flow;
Who with vast fleets, as with a mighty chain,
Could bind the madness of the roaring main;
All lost? all undistinguished? nowhere found?
How will this truth in Bourbon's palace sound?
That hour, on which the Almighty King on high,
From all eternity has fixed his eye,
Whether his right hand favoured or annoyed,
Continued, altered, threatened, or destroyed,
Southern or eastern sceptre downward hurled,
Gave north or west dominion o'er the world;
The point of time, for which the world was built,
For which the blood of God himself was spilt,
That dreadful moment is arrived.——
Aloft, the seats of bliss their pomp display,
Brighter than brightness this distinguished day;
Less glorious when of old the eternal Son
From realms of night returned with trophies won:
Through Heaven's high gates when he triumphant rode,
And shouting angels hailed the Victor-God.
Horrors beneath, darkness in darkness, hell
Of hell, where torments behind torments dwell;
A furnace formidable, deep and wide,
O'erboiling with a mad sulphureous tide,
Expands its jaws, most dreadful to survey,
And roars outrageous for the destined prey:
The sons of light scarce unappalled look down,
And nearer press Heaven's everlasting throne
Such is the scene, and one short moment's space
Concludes the hopes, and fears of human race.
Proceed who dares!—I tremble as I write;
The whole creation swims before my sight
I see, I see the Judge's frowning brow·
Say not 'tis distant; I behold it now;
I faint, my tardy blood forgets to flow,
My roul recoils at the stupendous wo;
That wo, those pangs, which from the guilty breast
In these, or words like these, shall be expressed:—
'Who burst the barriers of my peaceful grave?
Ah! cruel Death, that would no longer save,
But grudged me even that narrow dark abode,
And cast me out into the wrath of God;
Where shrieks, the roaring flame, the rattling chain,
And all the dreadful eloquence of pain,
Our only song; black fire's malignant light,
The sole refreshment of the blasted sight.
'Must all those powers Heaven gave me to supply
My soul with pleasure, and bring in my joy,
Rise up in arms against me, join the foe,
Sense, reason, memory, increase my wo?
And shall my voice, ordained on hymns to dwell,
Corrupt to groans, and blow the fires of hell?

Oh! must I look with terror on my gain,
And with existence only measure pain?
What! no reprieve, no least indulgence given,
No beam of hope, from any point of Heaven!
Ah, Mercy! Mercy! art thou dead above?
Is love extinguished in the source of love?
'Bold that I am, did heaven stoop down to hell?
The expiring Lord of life my ransom seal?
Have I not been industrious to provoke?
From his embraces obstinately broke?
Pursued and panted for his mortal hate,
Earned my destruction, laboured out my fate?
And dare I on extinguished love exclaim?
Take, take full vengeance; rouse the slackening flame;
Just is my lot—but, oh, must it transcend
The reach of time, despair a distant end?
Where dreadful growth shoot forward, and arise
Where Thought can't follow, and bold Fancy dies.
'*Never!* where falls the soul at that dread sound?
Down an abyss how dark, and how profound!
Down, down, (I still am falling—horrid pain!)
Ten thousand thousand fathoms still remain;
My plunge but still begun—and this for sin?
Could I offend if I had never been,
But still increased the senseless happy mass,
Flowed in the stream, or shivered in the grass.
'Father of mercies! why from silent earth
Didst thou awake, and curse me into birth?
Tear me from quiet, ravish me from night,
And make a thankless present of thy light?
Push into being a reverse of thee,
And animate a clod with misery!
'The beasts are happy; they come forth, and keep
Short watch on earth, and then lie down to sleep:
Pain is for man; and, oh, how vast a pain
For crimes which made the Godhead bleed in vain?
Annulled his groans, as far as in them lay,
And flung his agonies and death away?
As our dire punishment for ever strong,
Our constitution, too, for ever young,
Cursed with returns of vigour, still the same,
Powerful to bear, and satisfy the flame;
Still to be caught, and still to be pursued;
To perish still, and still to be renewed.
'And this my help, my God, at thy decree?
Nature is changed, and hell should succour me.
And canst thou then, look down from perfect bliss,
And see me plunging in the dark abyss?
Calling thee Father in a sea of fire?
Or pouring blasphemies at thy desire?
With mortals' anguish wilt thou raise thy name,
And by my pangs Omnipotence proclaim?
'Thou who canst toss the planets to and fro,
Contract not thy great vengeance to my wo;
Crush worlds; in hotter flames fallen angels lay;
On me almighty wrath is cast away.
Call back thy thunders, Lord: hold in thy rage,
Nor with a speck of wretchedness engage;
Forget me quite, nor stoop a worm to blame,
But lose me in the greatness of thy name.
Thou art all love, all mercy, all divine,
And shall I make those glories cease to shine?
Shall sinful man grow great by his offence,
And from its course turn back Omnipotence?
'Forbid it; and, oh grant, great God, at least
This one, this slender, almost *no* request;
When I have wept a thousand lives away,
When Torment is grown weary of its prey,
When I have raved ten thousand years in fire,
Ten thousand thousands, let me then expire.'
Deep anguish! but too late: the hopeless soul
Bound to the bottom of the burning pool,
Though loth, and ever loud blaspheming, owns
He's justly doomed to pour eternal groans;
Inclosed with horrors, and transfixed with pain,
Rolling in vengeance, struggling with his chain;
To talk to fiery tempests, to implore
The raging flame to give its burnings o'er;
To toss, to writhe, to pant beneath his load,
And bear the weight of an offended God.
The favoured of their Judge in triumph move
To take possession of their thrones above,
Satan's accursed desertion to supply,
And fill the vacant stations of the sky;
Again to kindle long extinguished rays,
And with new lights dilate the heavenly blaze
To crop the roses of immortal youth,
And drink the fountain-head of sacred truth
To swim in seas of bliss, to strike the string,
And lift the voice to their Almighty King;
To lose eternity in grateful lays
And fill Heaven's wide circumference with praise.
But I attempt the wondrous height in vain,
And leave unfinished the too lofty strain:
What boldly I begin, let others end;
My strength, exhausted, fainting I descend,
And choose a less but no ignoble theme,
Dissolving elements, and worlds in flame.
The fatal period, the great hour, is come,
And Nature shrinks at her approaching doom;
Loud peals of thunder give the sign, and all
Heaven's terrors in array surround the ball;
Sharp lightnings with the meteor's blaze conspire,
And, darted downward, set the world on fire:
Black rising clouds the thickened ether choke,
And spiry flames dart through the rolling smoke,
With keen vibrations cut the sullen night,
And strike the darkened sky with dreadful light;
From Heaven's four regions, with immortal force,
Angels drive on the wind's impetuous course,
To enrage the flame; it spreads, it soars on high,
Swells in the storm, and billows through the sky:
Here winding pyramids of fire ascend,
Cities and deserts in one ruin blend.

Here blazing volumes, wafted, overwhelm
The spacious face of a far distant realm;
There, undermined, down rush eternal hills,
The neighbouring vales the vast destruction fills.
Hear'st thou that dreadful crack, that sound which broke
Like peals of thunder, and the centre shook?
What wonders must that groan of Nature tell?
Olympus there, and mightier Atlas, fell,
Which seemed, above the reach of Fate, to stand
A towering monument of God's right-hand,
Now dust and smoke, whose brow, so lately, spread
O'er sheltered countries its diffusive shade.
Show me that celebrated spot, where all
The various rulers of the severed ball
Have humbly sought wealth, honour, and redress,
That land which Heaven seemed diligent to bless,
Once called Britannia; can her glories end?
And can't surrounding seas her realms defend?
Alas! in flames behold surrounding seas!
Like oil, their waters but augment the blaze.
Some angel say, where ran proud Asia's bound?
Or where with fruits was fair Europa crowned?
Where stretched waste Lybia? where did India's store
Sparkle in diamonds, and her golden ore?
Each lost in each, their mingling kingdoms glow,
And all dissolved, one fiery deluge flow:
Thus earth's contending monarchies are joined,
And a full period of ambition find.
And now whate'er or swims, or walks, or flies,
Inhabitants of sea, or earth, or skies;
All on whom Adam's wisdom fixed a name,
All plunge, and perish in the conquering flame.
This globe alone would but defraud the fire,
Starve its devouring rage; the flakes aspire,
And catch the clouds, and make the heavens their prey;
The sun, the moon, the stars, all melt away;
All, all is lost; no monument, no sign,
Where once so proudly blazed the gay machine.
So bubbles on the foaming stream expire;
So sparks that scatter from the kindling fire;
The devastations of one dreadful hour,
The great Creator's six days' work devour:
A mighty, mighty ruin! yet one soul
Has more to boast, and far outweighs the whole;
Exalted in superior excellence,
Casts down to nothing such a vast expense.
Have ye not seen the eternal mountains nod,
An earth dissolving, a descending God?
What strange surprises through all nature ran?
For whom these revolutions but for man?
For him Omnipotence new measures takes,
For him through all eternity awakes;
Pours on him gifts sufficient to supply
Heaven's loss, and with fresh glories fill the sky.
Think deeply then, O Man! how great thou art:
Pay thyself homage with a trembling heart;
What angels guard no longer dare neglect,
Slighting thyself, affront not God's respect.
Enter the sacred temple of thy breast,
And gaze and wander there, a ravished guest;
Gaze on those hidden treasures thou shalt find,
Wander through all the glories of thy mind:
Of perfect knowledge, see, the dawning light
Foretells a moon most exquisitely bright!
Here springs of endless joy are breaking forth:
There buds the promise of celestial worth!
Worth which must ripen in a happier clime,
And brighter sun, beyond the bounds of time.
Thou, minor, canst not guess thy vast estate,
What stores, on foreign coasts, thy landing wait,
Lose not thy claim, let virtue's paths be trod,
Thus glad all Heaven, and please that bounteous God,
Who, to light thee to pleasures, hung on high
Yon radiant orb, proud regent of the sky:
That service done, its beams shall fade away,
And God shine forth in one eternal day!

The Force of Religion;

OR,

VANQUISHED LOVE.

A POEM.

IN TWO BOOKS.

Gratior et pulchro veniens in corpore virtus—— *Virg.*

BOOK I.

—Ad cœlum ardentia lumina tolleus,
Lumina; nam teneras arcebant vincula palmas.— *Virg.*

FROM lofty themes, from thoughts that soared on high,
And opened wondrous scenes above the sky,
My muse! descend: indulge my fond desire:
With softer thoughts my melting soul inspire,
And smooth my numbers to a female's praise;
A partial world will listen to my lays,
While Anna reigns, and sets a female name
Unrivalled in the glorious lists of Fame.

Hear, ye fair daughters of this happy land!
Whose radiant eyes the vanquish'd world command,
Virtue is beauty: but when charms of mind
With elegance of outward form are joined;
When youth makes such bright objects still more bright,
And fortune sets them in the strongest light,
'Tis all of heaven that we below may view,
And all but adoration is your due.
Famed female virtue did this isle adorn
Ere Ormond, or her glorious queen, was born;
When now Maria's powerful arms prevailed,
And haughty Dudley's bold ambition failed,
The beauteous daughter of great Suffolk's race,
In blooming youth, adorned with every grace,
Who gained a crown by treason not her own,
And innocently filled another's throne,
Hurled from the summit of imperial state,
With equal mind sustained the stroke of fate.
But how will Guilford, her far dearer part,
With manly reason fortify his heart?
At once she longs, and is afraid to know;
Now swift she moves, and now advances slow,
To find her lord, and finding, passes by,
Silent with fear, nor dares she meet his eye,
Lest that, unasked, in speechless grief disclose
The mournful secret of his inward woes.
Thus, after sickness, doubtful of her face,
The melancholy virgin shuns the glass.
At length, with troubled thought, but look serene,
And sorrow softened by her heavenly mien,
She clasps her lord, brave, beautiful, and young,
While tender accents melt upon her tongue;
Gentle and sweet, as vernal zephyr blows,
Fanning the lily, or the blooming rose.
"Grieve not, my lord; a crown, indeed, is lost;
What far outshines a crown we still may boast;
A mind composed, a mind that can disdain
A fruitless sorrow for a loss so vain.
Nothing is lost that virtue can improve
To wealth eternal, and return above;
Above where no distinction shall be known
'Twixt him whom storms have shaken from a throne,
And him who, basking in the smiles of Fate,
Shone forth in all the splendour of the great:
Nor can I find the difference here below;
I lately was a queen; I still am so,
While Guilford's wife, thee rather I obey,
Than o'er mankind extend imperial sway.
When we lie down on some obscure retreat,
Incensed Maria may her rage forget;
And I to death my duty will improve,
And what you miss in empire add in love.
Your godlike soul is opened in your look,
And I have faintly your great meaning spoke.
For this alone I'm pleased I wore the crown,
To find with what content we lay it down.
Heroes may win, but 'tis a heavenly race
Can quit a throne with a becoming grace."
Thus spoke the fairest of her sex, and cheered
Her drooping lord, whose boding bosom feared
A darker cloud of ills would burst, and shed
Severer vengeance on her guiltless head.
Too just, alas, the terrors which he felt!
For, lo! a guard!—forgive him if he melt—
How sharp her pangs, when severed from his side,
The most sincerely loved, and loving bride
In space confined, the muse forbears to tell;
Deep was her anguish, but she bore it well:
His pain was equal, but his virtue less;
He thought in grief there could be no excess.
Pensive he sat, o'ercast with gloomy care,
And often fondly clasped his absent fair;
Now, silent, wandered through his rooms of state,
And sickened at their pomp, and taxed his fate,
Which thus adorned, in all her shining store,
A splendid wretch, magnificently poor.
And on the bridal bed his eyes were cast,
And anguish fed on his enjoyments past;
Each recollected pleasure made him smart,
And every transport stabbed him to the heart.
That happy moon which summoned to delight,
That moon which shone on his dear nuptial night,
Which saw him fold her yet untasted charms
(Denied to princes) in his longing arms,
Now sees the transient blessing fleet away,
Empire of love! the vision of a day.
Thus in the British clime, a summer-storm
Will oft the smiling face of heaven deform;
The winds with violence at once descend,
Sweep flowers and fruits, and make the forest bend
A sudden winter, while the sun is near,
O'ercomes the season, and inverts the year.
But whither is the captive borne away,
The beauteous captive! from the cheerful day?
The scene is changed indeed: before her eyes
Ill-boding locks and unknown horrors rise;
For pomp and splendour, for her guard and crown,
A gloomy dungeon, and a keeper's frown:
Black thoughts each morn invade the lover's breast;
Each night a ruffian locks the queen to rest.
Ah, mournful change, if judged by vulgar minds!
But Suffolk's daughter its advantage finds.
Religion's force divine is best displayed
In deep desertion of all human aid:
To succour in extremes is her delight,
And cheer the heart when terror strikes the sight
We, disbelieving our own senses, gaze,
And wonder what a mortal's heart can raise
To triumph o'er misfortunes, smile in grief,
And comfort those who come to bring relief:
We gaze, and, as we gaze, wealth, fame, decay,
And all the world's vain glories fade away.
Against her cares she raised a dauntless mind,
And with an ardent heart, but most resigned,

Deep in the dreadful gloom, with pious heat,
Amid the silence of her dark retreat,
Addressed her God—"Almighty Power Divine!
'Tis thine to raise, and to depress is thine;
With honour to light up the name unknown,
Or to put out the lustre of a throne.
In my short span both fortunes I have proved,
And though with ill frail nature will be moved,
I'll bear it well: (O strengthen me to bear!)
And if my piety may claim thy care,
If I remembered, in youth's giddy heat,
And tumult of a court, a future state,
O favour, when thy mercy I implore,
For one who never guilty sceptre bore!
'Twas I received the crown; my lord is free;
If it must fall, let vengeance fall on me;
Let him survive, his country's name to raise,
And in a guilty land to speak thy praise!
O may th' indulgence of a father's love,
Poured forth on me, be doubled from above!
If these are safe, I'll think my prayers succeed,
And bless thy tender mercies whilst I bleed."
'Twas now the mournful eve before that day
In which the queen to her full wrath gave way;
Through rigid justice rushed into offence,
And drank, in zeal, the blood of innocence.
The sun went down in clouds, and seemed to mourn
The sad necessity of his return;
The hollow wind, and melancholy rain,
Or did, or was imagined to complain:
The tapers cast an inauspicious light;
Stars there were none, and doubly dark the night.
Sweet Innocence in chains can take her rest;
Soft slumber gently creeping through her breast,
She sinks; and in her sleep is re-enthroned,
Mocked by a gaudy dream, and vainly crowned.
She views her fleets and armies, seas and land,
And stretches wide her shadow of command:
With royal purple is her vision hung;
By phantom hosts are shouts of conquest rung;
Low at her feet the suppliant rival lies;
Our prisoner mourns her fate, and bids her rise.
Now level beams upon the waters played,
Glanced on the hills, and westward cast the shade;
'The busy trades in city had began
'To sound, and speak the painful life of man.
In tyrant's breasts the thoughts of vengeance rouse,
And the fond bridegroom turns him to his spouse.
At this first birth of light, while morning breaks,
Our spouseless bride, our widowed wife, awakes;
Awakes and smiles; nor night's imposture blames:
Her real pomps were little more than dreams;
A short-lived blaze, a lightning quickly o'er,
That died in birth, that shone and was no more;
She turns her side and soon resumes a state
Of mind well suited to her altered fate,
Serene, though serious, when dread tidings come
(Ah wretched Guilford!) of her instant doom.
Sun! hide thy beams; in clouds as black as night
Thy face involve; be guiltless of the sight;
Or haste more swiftly to the western main,
Nor let her blood the conscious daylight stain.
Oh! how severe! to fall so new a bride,
Yet blushing from the priest, in youthful pride;
When Time had just matured each perfect grace,
And opened all the wonders of her face!
To leave her Guilford dead to all relief,
Fond of his wo, and obstinate in grief.
Unhappy fair! whatever Fancy drew,
(Vain promised blessings) vanish from her view;
No train of cheerful days, endearing nights,
No sweet domestic joys, and chaste delights;
Pleasures that blossom e'en from doubts and fears,
And bliss and rapture rising out of cares:
No little Guilford, with paternal grace,
Lulled on her knee, or smiling in her face;
Who, when her dearest father shall return,
From pouring tears on her untimely urn,
Might comfort to his silver hairs impart,
And fill her place in his indulgent heart;
As where fruits fall, quick-rising blossoms smile,
And the blessed Indian of his cares beguile.
In vain these various reasons jointly press
To blacken death, and heighten her distress;
She, through the' encircling terrors darts her sight
To the blessed regions of eternal light,
And fills her soul with peace: to weeping friends
Her father and her lord she recommends,
Unmoved herself: her foes her air survey,
And rage to see their malice thrown away.
She soars; now nought on earth detains her care—
But Guilford, who still struggles for his share.
Still will his form importunately rise,
Clog and retard her transport to the skies.
As trembling flames now take a feeble flight,
Now catch the brand with a returning light,
Thus her soul onward, from the seats above
Falls fondly back, and kindles into love.
At length she conquers in the doubtful field;
That heaven she seeks will be her Guilford's shield.
Now death is welcome: his approach is slow;
'Tis tedious longer to expect the blow.
Oh, mortals! short of sight, who think the past,
O'erblown misfortune still shall prove the last:
Alas! misfortunes travel in a train,
And oft in life from one perpetual chain:
Fear buries fear, and ills on ills attend,
Till life and sorrow meet one common end.
She thinks that she has nought but death to fear,
And death is conquered. Worse than death is near:
Her rigid trials are not yet complete;
The news arrives of her great father's fate.
She sees his hoary head, all white with age,
A victim to the offended monarch's rage.

How great the mercy, had she breathed her last
Ere the dire sentence on her father past!
A fonder parent Nature never knew,
And, as his age increased, his fondness grew.
A parent's love ne'er better was bestowed;
The pious daughter in her heart o'erflowed.
And can she from all weakness still refrain?
And still the firmness of her soul maintain?
Impossible! a sigh will force its way,
One patient tear her mortal birth betray;
She sighs and weeps! but so she weeps and sighs,
As silent dews descend, and vapours rise.
Celestial Patience! how dost thou defeat
The foe's proud menace, and elude his hate?
While Passion takes his part, betrays our peace,
To death and torture swells each slight disgrace:
By not opposing, thou dost ills destroy,
And wear thy conquered sorrows into joy.
Now she revolves within her anxious mind,
What wo still lingers in reserve behind.
Griefs rise on griefs, and she can see no bound,
While nature lasts, and can receive a wound.
The sword is drawn; the Queen to rage inclined,
By mercy nor by piety confined.
What mercy can the zealot's heart assuage,
Whose piety itself converts to rage?
She thought, and sighed: and now the blood began
To leave her beauteous cheek all cold and wan:
New sorrow dimmed the lustre of her eye,
And on her cheek the fading roses die.
Alas! should Guilford too—When now she's brought
To that dire view, that precipice of thought,
While there she trembling stands, nor dares look down
Nor can recede, 'till Heaven's decrees are known.
Cure of all ills, till now her lord appears—
But not to cheer her heart, and dry her tears!
Not now, as usual, like the rising day,
To chase the shadows and the damps away;
But, like a gloomy storm, at once to sweep
And plunge her to the bottom of the deep.
Black were his robes, dejected was his air,
His voice was frozen by his cold despair;
Slow like a ghost, he moved with solemn pace;
A dying paleness sat upon his face.
Back she recoiled, she smote her lovely breast,
Her eyes the anguish of her heart confest;
Struck to the soul, she staggered with the wound,
And sunk, a breathless image, to the ground.
Thus the fair lily, when the sky's o'ercast,
At first but shudders in the feeble blast;
But when the winds and weighty rains descend,
The fair and upright stem is forced to bend,
Till broke, at length, its snowy leaves are shed,
And strew, with dying sweets, their native bed.

BOOK II.

Hic pietatis honos? sic nos in sceptra reponis?—*Virg.*

Her Guilford clasps her, beautiful in death,
And with a kiss recalls her fleeting breath.
To tapers thus, which by a blast expire,
A lighted taper, touched, restores the fire:
She reared her swimming eye, and saw the light,
And Guilford too, or she had loathed the sight
Her father's death she bore, despised her own,
But now she must, she will have leave to groan.
"Ah! Guilford!" she began, and would have spoke,
But sobs rushed in, and every accent broke:
Reason itself, as gusts of passion blew,
Was ruffled in the tempest, and withdrew.
So the youth lost his image in the well,
When tears upon the yielding surface fell;
The scattered features slid into decay,
And spreading circles drove his face away.
To touch the soft affections, and control
The manly temper of the bravest soul,
What with afflicted beauty can compare,
And drops of love distilling from the fair?
It melts us down: our pains delight bestow,
And we with fondness languish o'er our wo.
This Guilford proved: and with excess of pain,
And pleasure too, did to his bosom strain
The weeping fair: sunk deep in soft desire,
Indulged his love, and nursed the raging fire:
Then tore himself away, and, standing wide,
As fearing a relapse of fondness, cried,
With ill dissembled grief, "My life! forbear;
You wound your Guilford with each cruel tear:
Did you not chide my grief? repress your own,
Nor want compassion for yourself alone.
Have you beheld how, from the distant main,
The thronging waves roll on, a numerous train,
And foam, and bellow, till they reach the shore,
There burst their noisy pride, and are no more?
Thus the successive flows of human race,
Chased by the coming, the preceding chase;
They sound and swell, their haughty heads they rear,
Then fall and flatten, break, and disappear.
Life is a forfeit we must shortly pay,
And where's the mighty lucre of a day?
Why should you mourn my fate? 'tis most unkind;
Your own you bore with an unshaken mind:
And which, can you imagine, was the dart
That drank most blood, sunk deepest in my heart?
I can not live without you; and my doom
I meet with joy, to share one common tomb.—
And are again your tears profusely spilt?
Oh! then, my kindness blackens to my guilt,
It foils itself if it recall your pain:—
Life of my life! I beg you to refrain:

The load which Fate imposes you increase,
And help Maria to destroy my peace."
But, oh! against himself his labour turned;
The more he comforted, the more she mourned.
Compassion swells our grief; words soft and kind
But sooth our weakness, and dissolve the mind.
Her sorrow flowed in streams; nor her's alone;
While that he blamed, he yielded to his own.
Where are the smiles she wore, when she so late,
Hailed him great partner of the regal state;
When orient gems around her temples blazed,
And bending nations on the glory gazed?
'Tis now the Queen's command they both retreat,
To weep with dignity, and mourn in state:
She forms the decent misery with joy,
And loads with pomp the wretch she would destroy.
A spacious hall is hung with black, all light
Shut out, and noon-day darkened into night:
From the dim roof a lamp depends on high,
Like a dim crescent in a clouded sky;
It sheds a quivering melancholy gloom,
Which only shows the darkness of the room:
A shining axe is on the table laid,
A dreadful sight! and glitters through the shade.
In this sad scene the lovers are confined,
A scene of terrors to a guilty mind!
A scene that would have damped with rising cares,
And quite extinguished every love but theirs.
What can they do? they fix their mournful eyes—
Then Guilford thus abruptly; "I despise
An empire lost; I fling away the crown;
Numbers have laid that bright delusion down;
But where's the Charles, or Dioclesian where,
Could quit the blooming, wedded, weeping fair?
Oh! to dwell ever on thy lip! to stand
In full possession of thy snowy hand!
And, through the unclouded crystal of thine eye,
The heavenly treasures of thy mind to spy!
Till rapture reason happily destroys,
And my soul wanders through immortal joys!
Give me the world, and ask me where's my bliss?
I clasp thee to my breast, and answer, This.
And shall the grave"—He groans, and can no more,
But all her charms in silence traces o'er;
Her lip, her cheek, and eye, to wonder wrought,
And, wondering, sees, in sad presaging thought,
From that fair neck, that world of beauty, fall,
And roll along the dust, a ghastly ball!
Oh! let those tremble who are greatly blessed!
For who but Guilford could be thus distressed?
Come hither all you happy! all you great!
From flowery meadows, and from rooms of state;
Nor think I call your pleasures to destroy,
But to refine, and to exalt, your joy:
Weep not; but smiling, fix your ardent care
On nobler titles than the brave or fair.
Was ever such a mournful, moving sight?
See, if you can, by that dull, trembling, light:
Now they embrace; and, mixed with bitter wo,
Like Isis and her Thames, one stream they flow:
Now they start wide; fixed in benumbing care,
They stiffen into statues of despair:
Now, tenderly severe, and fiercely kind,
They rush at once; they fling their cares behind,
And clasp, as if to death; new vows repeat,
And quite wrapped up in love, forget their fate.
A short delusion! for the raging pain
Returns, and their poor hearts must bleed again.
Meantime the queen new cruelty decreed;
But ill content that they should only bleed,
A priest is sent, who, with insidious art,
Instils his poison into Suffolk's heart;
And Guilford drank it, hanging on the breast,
He from his childhood was with Rome possessed
When now the ministers of Death draw nigh,
And in her dearest lord she first must die,
The subtle priest, who long had watched to find
The most unguarded passes of her mind,
Bespoke her thus: "Grieve not; 'tis in your power
Your lord to rescue from this fatal hour."
Her bosom pants; she draws her breath with pain;
A sudden horror thrills through every vein;
Life seems suspended, on his words intent,
And her soul trembles for the great event.
The priest proceeds: "Embrace the faith of Rome,
And ward your own, your lord's, and father's doom."
Ye blessed Spirits! now your charge sustain;
The past was ease; now first she suffers pain:
Must she pronounce her father's death? must she
Bid Guilford bleed?—It must not, can not, be.
It can not be! but 'tis the Christian praise,
Above impossibilities to raise
The weakness of our nature, and deride
Of vain philosophy the boasted pride.
What though our feeble sinews scarce impart
A moment's swiftness to the feathered dart;
Though tainted air our vigorous youth can break,
And a chill blast the hardy warrior shake?
Yet are we strong: hear the loud tempest roar
From east to west, and call us weak no more:
The lightning's unresisted force proclaims
Our might; and thunders raise our humble names;
'Tis our Jehovah fills the heavens; as long
As he shall reign Almighty, we are strong:
We, by devotion, borrow from his throne;
And almost make Omnipotence our own:
We force the gates of heaven, by fervent prayer
And call forth triumph out of man's despair.
Our lovely mourner, kneeling, lifts her eyes
And bleeding heart, in silence, to the skies,

Devoutly sad—Then, brightening, like the day,
When sudden winds sweep scattered clouds away,
Shining in majesty, till now unknown;
And breathing life and spirit scarce her own;
She, rising, speaks: "If these the terms——?"
Here Guilford, cruel Guilford, (barbarous man!
Is this thy love?) as swift as lightning ran;
O'erwhelmed her with tempestuous sorrow fraught,
And stifled, in its birth, the mighty thought;
Then bursting fresh into a flood of tears;
Fierce, resolute, delirious with his fears;
His fears for her alone: he beat his breast,
And thus the fervour of his soul exprest:
"Oh! let thy thought o'er our past converse rove,
And show one moment uninflamed with love!
Oh! if thy kindness can no longer last,
In pity to thyself, forget the past!
Else wilt thou never, void of shame and fear,
Pronounce his doom whom thou hast held so dear,
Thou who hast took me to thy arms, and swore
Empires were vile, and Fate could give no more;
That to continue was its utmost power,
And make the future like the present hour;
Now call a ruffian, bids his cruel sword
Lay wide the bosom of thy worthless lord?
Transfix his heart (since you its love disclaim)
And stain his honour with a traitor's name.
This might perhaps be borne without remorse,
But sure a father's pangs will have their force!
Shall his good age, so near its journey's end,
Through cruel torment to the grave descend?
His shallow blood all issue at a wound,
Wash a slave's feet, and smoke upon the ground?
But he to you has ever been severe;
Then take your vengeance."—Suffolk now drew near,
Bending beneath the burden of his care,
His robes neglected, and his head was bare:
Decrepit Winter, in the yearly ring,
Thus slowly creeps to meet the blooming spring:
Downward he cast a melancholy look,
Thrice turned to hide his grief, then faintly spoke.
"Now deep in years, and forward in decay,
That axe can only rob me of a day:
For thee, my soul's desire! I can't refrain;
And shall my tears, my last tears, flow in vain?
When you shall know a mother's tender name,
My heart's distress no longer will you blame."
At this, afar his bursting groans were heard;
The tears ran trickling down his silver beard:
He snatched her hand, which to his lips he pressed,
And bid her plant a dagger in his breast;
Then sinking, called her piety unjust,
And soiled his hoary temples in the dust.

Hard-hearted men! will you no mercy know?
Has the queen bribed you to distress her foe?
O weak deserters to Misfortune's part,
By false affection thus to pierce her heart!
When she had soared, to let your arrows fly,
And fetch her bleeding from the middle sky.
And can her virtue, springing from the ground,
Her flight recover, and disdain the wound,
When cleaving love, and human interest, bind
The broken force of her aspiring mind!
As round the generous eagle, which in vain
Exerts her strength, the serpent wreathes his train,
Her struggling wings entangles, curling plies
His poisonous tail and stings her as she flies.
While yet the blow's first dreadful weight she feels,
And with its force her resolution reels,
Large doors, unfolding with a mournful sound,
To view discover, weltering on the ground,
Three headless trunks of those whose arms maintained,
And in her wars immortal glory gained:
The lifted axe assured her ready doom,
And silent mourners saddened all the room.
Shall I proceed, or here break off my tale,
Nor truths to stagger human faith reveal?
She met this utmost malice of her fate
With Christian dignity and pious state;
The beating storm's propitious rage she blessed,
And all the martyr triumphed in her breast.
Her lord, and father, for a moment's space,
She strictly folded in her soft embrace!
Then thus she spoke, while angels heard on high.
And sudden gladness smiled along the sky.
"Your over-fondness has not moved my hate;
I am well pleased you make my death so great:
I joy I can not save you; and have given
Two lives much dearer than my own to heaven,
If so the queen decrees.*—But I have cause
To hope my blood will satisfy the laws;
And there is mercy still for you in store:
With me the bitterness of death is o'er;
He shot his sting in that farewell embrace,
And all that is to come is joy and peace.
Then let mistaken sorrow be supprest,
Nor seem to envy my approaching rest."
Then, turning to the ministers of fate,
She, smiling, said, "My victory's complete;
And tell your queen I thank her for the blow,
And grieve my gratitude I can not show.
A poor return I leave in England's crown
For everlasting pleasure and renown:
Her guilt alone allays this happy hour,
Her guilt, the only vengeance in her power."
Not Rome, untouched with sorrow, heard her fate,
And fierce Maria pityed her too late.

* Here she embraces them.

Love of Fame,

THE UNIVERSAL PASSION.

IN SEVEN CHARACTERISTICAL SATIRES.

——Fulgente trahit constrictos gloria curru
Non minus ignotos generosis.—*Hor.*

PREFACE.

THESE Satires have been favourably received at home and abroad. I am not conscious of the least malevolence to any particular person through all the characters, though some persons may be so selfish as to engross a general application to themselves. A writer in polite letters should be content with reputation, the private amusement he finds in his compositions, the good influence they have on his severer studies, that admission they give him to his superiors, and the possible good effect they may have on the public; or else he should join to his politeness some more lucrative qualification.

But it is possible that satire may not do much good. Men may rise in their affections to their follies, as they do to their friends, when they are abused by others. It is much to be feared that misconduct will never be chased out of the world by satire: all, therefore, that is to be said for it is, that misconduct will certainly be never chased out of the world by satire, if no satires are written. Nor is that term inapplicable to graver compositions; ethics, heathen and Christian, and the Scriptures themselves, are, in a great measure, a satire on the weakness and iniquity of men; and some part of that satire is in verse too; nay, in the first ages, philosophy and poetry were the same thing; wisdom wore no other dress: so that, I hope, these Satires will be the more easily pardoned that misfortune by the severe. Nay, historians themselves may be considered as satirists, and satirists most severe; since such are most human actions, that to relate is to expose them.

No man can converse much in the world, but, at what he meets with, he must either be insensible, or grieve, or be angry, or smile. Some passion (if we are not impassive) must be moved; for the general conduct of mankind is by no means a thing indifferent to a reasonable and virtuous man. Now, to smile at it, and turn it into ridicule, I think most eligible, as it hurts ourselves least, and gives vice and folly the greatest offence: and that for this reason, because what men aim at by them is, generally, public opinion and esteem; which truth is the subject of the following Satires; and joins them together, as several branches from the same root: an unity of design which has not, I think, in a set of satires, been attempted before.

Laughing at the misconduct of the world will, in a great measure, ease us of any more disagreeable passion about it. One passion is more effectually driven out by another than by reason, whatever some may teach; for to reason we owe our passions. Had we not reason, we should not be offended at what we find amiss: and the cause seems not to be the natural cure of any effect.

Moreover, laughing satire bids the fairest for success. The world is too proud to be fond of a serious tutor; and when an author is in a passion, the laugh, generally, as in conversation, turns against him. This kind of satire only has any delicacy in it. Of this delicacy Horace is the best master: he appears in good humour while he censures; and, therefore, his censure has the more weight, as supposed to proceed from judgment, not from passion. Juvenal is ever in a passion: he has but little valuable but his eloquence and morality; the last of which I have had in my eye, but rather for emulation than imitation, through my whole work.

But though I comparatively condemn Juvenal, in part of the Sixth Satire, (where the occasion most required it) I endeavoured to touch on his manner, but was forced to quit it soon, as disagreeable to the writer and reader too. Boileau has joined both the Roman satirists with great success, but has too much of Juvenal in his very serious 'Satire on Woman,' which should have been the gayest of all. An excellent critic of our own commends Boileau's closeness, or, as he calls it, *pressness*, particularly; whereas, it appears to me, that repetition is his fault, if any fault should be imputed to him.

There are some prose satirists of the greatest delicacy and wit, the last of which can never, or should never succeed, without the former. An author without it betrays too great a contempt for mankind, and opinion of himself; which are bad advocates for reputation and success. What a difference is there between the merit, if not the wit, of Cervantes and Rabelais? the last has a particular art of throwing a great deal of genius and learning into frolic and jest, but the genius and the scholar is all you can admire: you want the

gentleman to converse with in him: he is like a criminal who receives his life for some services; you commend, but you pardon too. Indecency offends our pride, as men, and our unaffected taste, as judges of composition: Nature has wisely formed us with an aversion to it, and he that succeeds in spite of it is *aliena venia, quam sua providentia tutior.**

Such wits, like false oracles of old, (which were wits and cheats) should set up for reputation among the weak in some Bœotia, which was the land of oracles; for the wise will hold them in contempt. Some wits, too, like oracles, deal in ambiguities, but not with equal success; for though ambiguities are the first excellence of an impostor, they are the last of a wit.

Some satirical wits and humourists, like their father Lucian, laugh at every thing indiscriminately, which betrays such a poverty of wit as can not afford to part with any thing, and such a want of virtue as to postpone it to a jest. Such writers encourage vice and folly, which they pretend to combat, by setting them on an equal foot with better things; and while they labour to bring every thing into contempt, how can they expect their own parts should escape? Some French writers, particularly, are guilty of this in matters of the last consequence, and some of our own: they that are for lessening the true dignity of mankind, are not sure of being successful, but with regard to one individual in it. It is this conduct that justly makes a wit a term of reproach: which puts me in mind of Plato's fable of the birth of Love, one of the prettiest fables of all antiquity; which will hold likewise with regard to modern poetry. 'Love (says he) is the son of the goddess Poverty and the god of Riches: he has from his father his daring genius, his elevation of thought, his building castles in the air, his prodigality, his neglect of things serious and useful, his vain opinion of his own merit, and his affectation of preference and distinction: from his mother he inherits his indigence, which makes him a constant beggar of favours, that importunity with which he begs, his flattery, his servility, his fear of being despised, which is inseparable from him.' This addition may be made, *viz.* that Poetry, like Love, is a little subject to blindness, which makes her way to preferments and honours; that she has her satirical quiver; and lastly, that she retains a dutiful admiration of her father's family, but divides her favours, and generally lives with her mother's relations. However, this is not necessity, but choice: were Wisdom her governess, she might have much more of the father than the mother; especially in such an age as this, which shows a due passion for her charms.

* Val. Max.

SATIRE I.

TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF DORSET.

——Tanto major Famæ sitis est, quam
Virtutis. JUV. Sat. 10.

My verse is satire; Dorset! lend your ear,
And patronise a Muse you can not fear.
To poets sacred is a Dorset's name,
Their wonted passport through the gates of Fame:
It bribes the partial reader into praise,
And throws a glory round the shelter'd lays:
The dazzled judgment fewer faults can see,
And gives applause to Blackmore, or to me,
But you decline the mistress we pursue;
Others are fond of Fame, but Fame of you.
Instructive Satire! true to Virtue's cause!
Thou shining supplement of public laws!
When flattered crimes of a licentious age
Reproach our silence, and demand our rage;
When purchased follies, from each distant land,
Like arts, improve in Britain's skilful hand;
When the Law shows her teeth, but dares not bite,
And South-Sea treasures are not brought to light;
When churchmen Scripture for the classics quit,
Polite apostates from God's grace to wit:*
When men grow great from their revenue spent,
And fly from bailiffs into parliament;
When dying sinners, to blot out their score,
Bequeath the Church the leavings of a whore;
To chafe our spleen, when themes like these increase,
Shall panegyric reign and censure cease?
Shall poësy, like law, turn wrong to right,
And dedications wash an Ethiop white?
Set up each senseless wretch for Nature's boast,
On whom praise shines, as trophies on a post?
Shall funeral Eloquence her colours spread,
And scatter roses on the wealthy dead?
Shall authors smile on such illustrious days,
And satirize with nothing—but their praise?
Why slumbers Pope, who leads the tuneful train,
Nor hears that virtue which he loves complain?
Donne, Dorset, Dryden, Rochester, are dead,
And guilt's chief foe in Addison is fled;
Congreve, who, crowned with laurels fairly won,
Sits smiling at the goal while others run,
He will not write; and (more provoking still)
Ye gods! he will not write, and Mævius will.
Doubly distressed, what author shall we find
Discreetly daring, and severely kind,
The courtly Roman's† shining path to tread,
And sharply smile prevailing folly dead!

* Many of the Greek and Latin classics had been edited by English divines.

† Horace.

Will no superior genius snatch the quill,
And save me, on the brink, from writing ill?
Though vain the strife, I'll strive my voice to raise:
What will not men attempt for sacred praise?
The love of praise, howe'er concealed by art,
Reigns, more or less, and glows in every heart;
The proud, to gain it, toils on toils endure;
The modest shun it, but to make it sure.
O'er globes and sceptres, now on thrones it swells,
Now trims the midnight lamp in college cells:
'Tis tory, whig; it plots, prays, preaches, pleads,
Harangues in senates, squeaks in masquerades.
Here to Steele's humour makes a bold pretence,
There, bolder, aims at Pulteney's* eloquence:
It aids the dancer's heel, the writer's head,
And heaps the plain with mountains of the dead;
Nor ends with life, but nods in sable plumes,
Adorns our hearse, and flatters on our tombs.
What is not proud? the pimp is proud to see
So many like himself in high degree:
The whore is proud her beauties are the dread
Of peevish virtue and the marriage-bed;
And the bribed cuckold, like crowned victims borne
To slaughter, glories in his gilded horn.
Some go to church, proud humbly to repent,
And come back much more guilty than they went,
One way they look, another way they steer,
Pray to the gods, but would have mortals hear;
And when their sins they set sincerely down,
They'll find that their religion has been one.
Others with wishful eyes on glory look,
When they have got their picture towards a book,
Or pompous title, like a gaudy sign,
Meant to betray dull sots to wretched wine.
If at his title Trapp† had dropped his quill,
Trapp might have passed for a great genius still.
But Trapp, alas! (excuse him if you can)
Is now a scribbler, who was once a man.
Imperious, some a classic fame demand,
For heaping up, with a laborious hand,
A wagon-load of meanings for one word,
While A's deposed, and B's with pomp restored.‡
Some, for renown, on scraps of learning dote,
And think they grow immortal as they quote.
To patch-work learned quotations are allied;
Both strive to make our poverty our pride.
On glass how witty is a noble peer?
Did ever diamond cost a man so dear?
Polite diseases make some idiots vain,
Which, if unfortunately well, they feign.
Of folly, vice, disease, men proud we see;
And (stranger still!) of blockheads' flattery,
Whose praise defames; as if a fool should mean,
By spitting on your face to make it clean.

Nor is't enough all hearts are swoln with Pride,
Her power is mighty, as her realm is wide.
What can she not perform? the love of Fame
Made bold Alphonsus his Creator blame;
Empedocles hurled down the burning steep;
And (stronger still) made Alexander weep;
Nay, it holds Delia from a second bed,
Though her loved lord has four half months been dead.
This passion with a pimple have I seen
Retard a cause, and give a judge the spleen.
By this inspired (O ne'er to be forgot!)
Some lords have learned to spell, and some to knot.
It makes Globose a speaker in the House;
He hems, and is delivered of his mouse:
It makes dear self on well-bred tongues prevail,
And *I* the little hero of each tale.
Sick with the love of Fame, what throngs pour in,
Unpeople court, and leave the senate thin?
My growing subject seems but just begun,
And, chariot-like, I kindle as I run.
Aid me, great Homer! with thy epic rules,
To take a catalogue of British fools.
Satire! had I thy Dorset's force divine,
A knave or fool should perish in each line;
Though for the first all Westminster should plead,
And for the last all Gresham intercede.
Begin. Who first the catalogue shall grace?
To quality belongs the highest place.
My lord comes forward; forward let him come!
Ye vulgar! at your peril give him room:
He stands for fame on his forefathers' feet,
By heraldry proved valiant or discreet.
With what a decent pride he throws his eyes
Above the man by three descents less wise?
If virtues at his noble hands you crave,
You bid him raise his fathers from the grave.
Men should press forward in Fame's glorious chase;
Nobles look backward, and so lose the race.
Let high birth triumph! what can be more great?
Nothing—but merit in a low estate.
To Virtue's humblest son let none prefer
Vice, though descended from the Conqueror.
Shall men, like figures, pass for high or base,
Slight or important, only by their place?
Titles are marks of honest men, and wise;
The fool or knave that wears a title, lies.
They that on glorious ancestors enlarge,
Produce their debt instead of their discharge.
Dorset! let those who proudly boast their line,
Like thee in worth hereditary shine.
Vain as false greatness is, the muse must own
We want not fools to buy that Bristol stone:
Mean sons of Earth, who, on a South-Sea tide
Of full success, swam into wealth and pride,
Knock with a purse of gold at Anstis' gate,
And beg to be descended from the great.

* Afterwards Earl of Bath.
† Dr. Trapp had been Professor of poetry in the University of Oxford.
‡ This alludes to Theobald's "Shakspeare Restored."

When men of infamy to grandeur soar,
They light a torch to show their shame the more.
Those governments, which curb not evils, cause;
And a rich knave's a libel on our laws.
Belus with solid glory will be crowned;
He buys no phantom, no vain empty sound;
But builds himself a name; and, to be great,
Sinks in a quarry an immense estate!
In cost and grandeur Chandos he'll outdo;
And, Burlington, thy taste is not so true.
The pile is finished, every toil is passed,
And full perfection is arrived at last;
When, lo! my lord to some small corner runs,
And leaves state-rooms to strangers and to duns.
The man who builds, and wants wherewith to pay,
Provides a home from which to run away.
In Britain, what is many a lordly seat,
But a discharge in full for an estate?
In smaller compass lies Pygmalion's fame;
Not domes, but antique statues, are his flame:
Not Fountaine's self more Parian charms has known,
Nor is good Pembroke* more in love with stone.
The bailiff's come (rude men, profanely bold!)
And bid him turn his Venus into gold.
'No, sirs,' he cries; 'I'll sooner rot in gaol:
Shall Grecian arts be trucked for English bail?'
Such heads might make their very busts to laugh:
His daughter starves; but Cleopatra's safe.†
Men overloaded with a large estate,
May spill their treasure in a nice conceit:
The rich may be polite; but oh! 'tis sad
To say you're curious, when we swear you're mad.
By your revenue measure your expense,
And to your funds and acres join your sense.
No man is blessed by accident or guess;
True wisdom is the price of happiness:
Yet few without long discipline are sage,
And our youth only lays up sighs for age.
But how, my Muse! canst thou resist so long
The bright temptation of the courtly throng,
Thy most inviting theme? the court affords
Much food for satire;—it abounds in lords.
'What lords are those saluting with a grin?'
One is just out, and one as lately in.
'How comes it, then, to pass, we see preside
On both their brows an equal share of pride?'
Pride, that impartial passion, reigns through all,
Attends our glory, nor deserts our fall.
As in its home it triumphs in high place,
And frowns, a haughty exile, in disgrace.
Some lords it bids admire their wands so white,
Which bloom, like Aaron's to their ravished sight:
Some lords it bids resign, and turn their wands,
Like Moses', into serpents in their hands
These sink, as divers, for renown, and boast,
With pride inverted, of their honours lost:
But against reason sure 'tis equal sin,
To boast of merely being *out* or *in*.
What numbers here, through odd ambition, strive
To seem the most transported things alive?
As if by joy desert was understood,
And all the fortunate were wise and good:
Hence aching bosoms wear a visage gay,
And stifled groans frequent the ball and play:
Completely dressed by Monteuil* and grimace,
They take their birth-day suit and public face.
Their smiles are only part of what they wear,
Put off at night with Lady Bristol's hair:
What bodily fatigue is half so bad?
With anxious care they labour to be glad.
What numbers, here, would into fame advance
Conscious of merit in the coxcomb's dance?
The tavern, park, assembly, mask, and play,
Those dear destroyers of the tedious day;
That wheel of fops; that saunter of the town:
Call it diversion, and the pill goes down.
Fools grin on fools, and stoic-like, support
Without one sigh, the pleasures of a court.
Courts can give nothing to the wise and good
But scorn of pomp and love of solitude.
High stations tumult, but not bliss, create:
None think the great unhappy but the great.
Fools gaze, and envy; envy darts a sting,
Which makes a swain as wretched as a king
I envy none their pageantry and show;
I envy none the gilding of their wo.
Give me, indulgent gods! with mind serene
And guiltless heart, to range the silvan scene.
No splendid poverty, no smiling care,
No well-bred hate, or servile grandeur there,
There pleasing objects useful thoughts suggest,
The sense is ravished, and the soul is blessed;
On every thorn delightful wisdom grows,
In every rill a sweet instruction flows:
But some, untaught, o'erhear the whispering rill,
In spite of sacred leisure blockheads still;
Nor shoots up Folly to a nobler bloom
In her own native soil, the drawing-room.
The squire is proud to see his coursers strain,
Or well-breath'd beagles sweep along the plain.
Say, dear Hippolitus! (whose drink is ale,
Whose erudition is a Christmas-tale,
Whose mistress is saluted with a smack,
And friend received with thumps upon the back)
When thy sleek gelding nimbly leaps the mound,
And Ringwood opens on the tainted ground,
Is that thy praise? let Ringwood's fame alone:
Just Ringwood leaves each animal his own,

* Sir Andrew Fountaine and the Earl of Pembroke were great admirers of antique statues.

† A famous statue.

* A famous tailor

Nor envies when a gipsy you commit,
And shake the clumsy bench with country wit;
When you the dullest of dull things have said,
And then ask pardon for the jest you made.
Here breathe, my Muse! and then thy task renew;
Ten thousand fools unsung are still in view.
Fewer lay-atheists made by church debates,
Fewer great beggars famed for large estates,
Ladies, whose love is constant as the wind,
Cits, who prefer a guinea to mankind;
Fewer grave lords to Scroope* discreetly bend,
And fewer shocks a statesman gives his friend.
Is there a man of an eternal vein,
Who lulls the town in winter with his strain,
At Bath, in summer, chants the reigning lass,
And sweetly whistles as the waters pass?
Is there a tongue like Delia's o'er her cup,
That runs for ages without winding up?
Is there whom his tenth epic mounts to fame?
Such, and such only, might exhaust my theme;
Nor would these heroes of the task be glad,
For who can write so fast as men run mad?

SATIRE II.

My Muse! proceed, and reach thy destined end,
Though toil and danger the bold task attend.
Heroes and gods make other poems fine,
Plain satire calls for sense in every line:
Then to what swarms thy faults I dare expose?
All friends to vice and folly are thy foes.
When such the foe, a war eternal wage,
'Tis most ill nature to repress thy rage;
And if these strains some nobler muse excite,
I'll glory in the verse I did not write.
So weak are human kind by Nature made,
Or to such weakness by their vice betrayed,
Almighty Vanity! to thee they owe
Their zest of pleasure, and their balm of wo.
Thou, like the sun, all colours dost contain,
Varying, like rays of light on drops of rain:
For every soul finds reasons to be proud,
Though hissed and hooted by the pointing crowd.
Warm in pursuit of foxes and renown,
Hippolitus demands the silvan crown:†
But Florio's fame, the product of a shower,
Grows in his garden, an illustrious flower!
Why teems the earth? why melt the vernal skies?
Why shines the sun? to make Paul Diack‡ rise.
From morn to night has Florio gazing stood,
And wondered how the gods could be so good:
What shape? what hue? was ever nymph so fair
He dotes! he dies! he, too, is rooted there.
O solid bliss! which nothing can destroy,
Except a cat, bird, snail, or idle boy.
In Fame's full bloom lies Florio down at night,
And wakes next day a most inglorious wight:
The tulip's dead! See thy fair sister's fate,
O C**! and be kind ere 'tis too late.
Nor are those enemies I mention'd all:
Beware, O florist! thy ambition's fall.
A friend of mine indulged this noble flame,
A quaker served him, Adam was his name;
To one loved tulip oft the master went,
Hung o'er it, and whole days in rapture spent;
But came, and missed it one ill-fated hour:
He raged! he roared, 'What demon cropt my flower?'
Serene, quoth Adam, 'Lo! 'twas crushed by me;
Fallen is the Baal to which thou bowed'st thy knee.'
But all men want amusement, and what crime
In such a paradise to fool their time?
None; but why proud of this? to fame they soar
We'll grant they're idle if they'll ask no more.
We smile at florists, we despise their joy,
And think their hearts enamoured of a toy,
But are those wiser whom we most admire,
Survey with envy, and pursue with fire?
What's he who sighs for wealth, or fame, or power
Another Florio doting on a flower;
A short-lived flower, and which has often sprung
From sordid arts, as Florio's out of dung.
With what, O Codrus! is thy fancy smit?
The flower of learning, and the bloom of wit.
Thy gaudy shelves with crimson bindings glow,
And Epictetus is a perfect beau.
How fit for thee, bound up in crimson too,
Gilt, and, like them, devoted to the view?
Thy books are furniture. Methinks 'tis hard
That science should be purchased by the yard
And Tonson, turned upholsterer, send home
The glided leather to fit up thy room.*
If not to some peculiar end assigned,
Study's the specious trifling of the mind,
Or is, at best, a secondary aim,
A chase for sport alone, and not for game.
If so, sure they who the mere volume prize,
But love the thicket where the quarry lies.
On buying books Lorenzo long was bent,
But found, at length, that it reduced his rent;
His farms were flown: when, lo! a sale comes on
A choice collection! what is to be done?
He sells his last, for he the whole will buy;
Sells e'en his house; nay, wants whereon to lie:
So high the generous ardour of the man
For Romans, Greeks, and Orientals ran.

* A great money-lender.
† This refers to the First Satire.
‡ The name of a tulip, and of a great stock-jobber, from whom the flower received it.

* Jacob Tonson fitted up many libraries of gilt books for South Sea coxcombs in 1720.

When terms were drawn, and brought him by the clerk,
Lorenzo signed the bargain—with his *mark*.
Unlearned men of books assume the care,
As eunuchs are the guardians of the fair.
Not in his authors' liveries alone
Is Codrus' erudite ambition shown:
Editions various, at high prices bought,
Inform the world what Codrus would be thought;
And to this cost another must succeed,
To pay a sage who says that he can read;
Who titles knows, and indexes has seen,
But leaves to Orrery* what lies between;
Of pompous books who shuns the proud expense,
And humbly is contented with their sense.
Orrery! whose accomplishments make good
The promise of a long-illustrious blood,
In arts and manners eminently graced,
The strictest honour! and the finest taste!
Accept this verse, if satire can agree
With so consummate an humanity.
By your example would Hilario mend,
How would it grace the talents of my friend,
Who, with the charms of his own genius smit,
Conceives all virtues are comprised in wit!
But time his fervent petulance may cool,
For, though he is a wit, he is no fool.
In time he'll learn to use, not waste, his sense;
Nor make a frailty of an excellence.
He spares nor friend nor foe, but calls to mind,
Like doomsday, all the faults of all mankind.
What though wit tickles, tickling is unsafe,
If still 'tis painful while it makes us laugh.
Who, for the poor renown of being smart,
Would leave a sting within a brother's heart?
Parts may be praised, good-nature is adored;
Then draw your wit as seldom as your sword,
And never on the weak; or you'll appear
As there no hero, no great genius here.
As in smooth oil the razor best is whet,
So wit is by politeness sharpest set:
Their want of edge from their offence is seen;
Both pain us least when exquisitely keen.
The fame men gives is for the joy they find;
Dull is the jester when the joke's unkind.
Since Marcus, doubtless, thinks himself a wit,
To pay my compliment what place so fit?
His most facetious Letters* came to hand,
Which my First Satire sweetly reprimand:
If that a just offence to Marcus gave,
Say, Marcus! which art thou, a fool or knave?
For all but such with caution I forbore;
That thou wast either I ne'er knew before:
I know thee now, both what thou art and who;
No Mask so good but Marcus must shine through;
False names are vain, thy lines their author tell;
Thy best concealment had been writing well:
But thou a brave neglect of fame hast shown,
Of others' fame, great genius! and thy own.
Write on unheeded, and this maxim know,
The man who pardons, disappoints his foe.
In malice to proud wits, some proudly lull
Their peevish reason, vain of being dull:
When some home-joke has stung their solemn souls,
In vengeance they determine—to be fools;
Through spleen, that little Nature gave make less,
Quite zealous in the ways of heaviness;
To lumps inanimate a fondness take,
And disinherit sons that are awake.
These, when their utmost venom they would spit,
Most barbarously tell you—'He's a wit.'
Poor negroes thus, to show their burning spite
To cacodemons, say—they're devilish white.
Lampridius, from the bottom of his breast,
Sighs o'er one child, but triumphs in the rest.
How just his grief? one carries in his head
A less proportion of the father's lead,
And is in danger, without special grace,
To rise above a justice of the peace.
The dunghill-breed of men a diamond scorn,
And feel a passion for a grain of corn;
Some stupid, plodding, money-loving wight,
Who wins their hearts by knowing black from white,
Who with much pains, exerting all his sense,
Can range aright his shillings, pounds, and pence.
The booby father craves a booby son,
And, by Heaven's blessing, thinks himself undone.
Wants of all kinds are made to Fame a plea,
One learns to lisp, another not to see:
Miss Duncomb, tottering, catches at your hand;
Was ever thing so pretty born to stand?
Whilst these what Nature gave disown, through pride,
Others affect what Nature has denied;
What Nature has denied, fools will pursue,
As apes are ever walking upon two.
Crassus, a grateful sage, our awe and sport!
Supports grave forms, for forms the sage support:
He hems, and cries, with an important air,
'If yonder clouds withdraw, it will be fair:'
Then quotes the Stagirite to prove it true,
And adds, 'The learned delight in something new.'
Is't not enough the blockhead scarce can read,
But must he wisely look, and gravely plead?
As far a formalist from wisdom sits,
In judging eyes, as libertines from wits.
These subtle wights (so blind are mortal men,
Though Satire touch them with her keenest pen)
For ever will hang out a solemn face,
To put off nonsense with a better grace.

* Charles Earl of Orrery.
† Letters sent to the Author, signed Marcus.

As pedlars with some hero's head make bold,
Illustrious mark! where pins are to be sold.
What 's the bent brow, or neck in thought reclined?
The body's wisdom to conceal the mind.
A man of sense can artifice disdain,
As men of wealth may venture to go plain:
And be this truth eternal ne'er forgot,
Solemnity 's a cover for a sot.
I find the fool when I behold the skreen,
For 'tis the wise man's interest to be seen.
Hence, Doddington, that openness of heart,
And just disdain for that poor mimic Art;
Hence (manly praise!) that manner, nobly free,
Which all admire, and I commend, in thee.
With generous scorn how oft hast thou surveyed
Of court and town the noontide masquerade
Where swarms of knaves the vizor quite disgrace,
And hide secure behind a naked face;
Where Nature's end of language is declined,
And men talk only to conceal the mind;
Where generous hearts the greatest hazard run,
And he who trusts a brother is undone?
These all their care expend on outward show
For wealth and fame; for fame alone the beau.
Of late at White's was young Florello seen;
How blank his look? how discomposed his mien?
So hard it proves in grief sincere to feign!
Sunk were his spirits, for his coat was plain.
Next day his breast regained its wonted peace;
His health was mended with a silver lace.
A curious artist long inured to toils
Of gentler sort, with combs, and fragrant oils,
Whether by chance or by some god inspired,
So touched his curls, his mighty soul was fired.
The well-swoln ties an equal homage claim,
And either shoulder has its share of fame;
His sumptuous watchcase, though concealed it lies,
Like a good conscience, solid joy supplies.
He only thinks himself (so far from vain!)
Stanhope* in wit, in breeding Deloraine.†
Whene'er by seeming chance, he throws his eye
On mirrors that reflect his Tyrian dye,
With how sublime a transport leaps his heart?
But Fate ordains that dearest friends must part:
In active measures, brought from France, he wheels,
And triumphs conscious of his learned heels.
So have I seen, on some bright summer's day,
A calf of genius, debonair and gay,
Dance on the bank, as if inspired by Fame,
Fond of the pretty fellow in the stream.
Morose is sunk with shame whene'er surprised
In linen clean, or peruke undisguised;
No sublunary chance his vestments fear,
Valued, like leopards, as their spots appear.
A famed surtout he wears, which once was blue,
And his foot swims in a capacious shoe:
One day his wife (for who can wives reclaim?)
Levelled her barbarous needle at his fame;
But open force was vain; by night she went,
And, while he slept, surprised the darling rent;
Where yawned the frieze is now become a doubt,
'And glory, at one entrance, quite shut out.'*
He scorns Florello, and Florello him;
This hates the filthy creature, that the prim:
Thus, in each other, both these fools despise
Their own dear selves, with undiscerning eyes;
Their methods various, but alike their aim;
The sloven and the fopling are the same.
Ye Whigs and Tories! thus it fares with you,
When party-rage too warmly you pursue;
Then both club nonsense, and impetuous pride
And folly join whom sentiments divide.
You vent your spleen, as monkeys, when they pass,
Scratch at the mimic monkey in the glass,
While both are one; and henceforth be it known,
Fools of both sides shall stand for fools alone.
'But who art thou?' methinks Florello cries;
'Of all thy species art thou only wise?'
Since smallest things can give our sins a twitch,
As crossing straws retard a passing witch,
Florello! thou my monitor shall be,
I'll conjure thus some profit out of thee.
O thou myself! abroad our counsels roam,
And, like ill husbands, take no care at home
Thou, too, art wounded with the common dart,
And Love of Fame lies throbbing at thy heart;
And what wise means to gain it hast thou chose?
Know, Fame and Fortune both are made of prose.
Is thy ambition sweating for a rhyme,
Thou unambitious fool! at this late time?
While I a moment name, a moment's past;
I'm nearer death in this verse than the last:
What then is to be done? be wise with speed:
A fool at forty is a fool indeed!
And what so foolish as the chase of fame?
How vain the prize! how impotent our aim!
For what are men who grasp at praise sublime,
But bubbles on the rapid stream of time,
That rise and fall, that swell and are no more,
Born and forgot, ten thousand in an hour?

SATIRE III.

TO THE RIGHT HON. MR. DODINGTON.

Long, Dodington! in debt, I long have sought
To ease the burden of my grateful thought;
And now a poet's gratitude you see,
Grant him two favours, and he'll ask for three:
For whose the present glory or the gain?
You give protection, I a worthless strain.
You love and feel the poet's sacred flame,
And know the basis of a solid fame;
Though prone to like, yet cautious to commend,
You read with all the malice of a friend;

* Earl Chesterfield. † Lord Deloraine.

* Milton's Paradise Lost.

Nor favour my attempts that way alone,
But more to raise my verse, conceal your own.
An ill-timed modesty! turn ages o'er,
When wanted Britain bright examples more?
Her learning, and her genius too, decays,
And dark and cold are her declining days;
As if men now were of another cast,
They meanly live on alms of ages past.
Men still are men; and they who boldly dare,
Shall triumph o'er the sons of cold Despair;
Or if they fail, they justly still take place
Of such who run in debt for their disgrace;
Who borrow much, then fairly make it known,
And damn it with improvements of their own.
We bring some new materials, and what's old
New cast with care, and in no borrowed mould:
Late times the verse may read, if these refuse,
And from sour critics vindicate the muse.
'Your work is long; the critics cry. 'Tis true,
And lengthens still, to take in fools like you:
Shorten my labour, if its length you blame:
For grow but wise, you rob me of my game;
As hunted hags, who, while the dogs pursue,
Renounce their four legs, and start up on two.
Like the bold bird upon the banks of Nile,
That picks the teeth of the dire crocodile,
Will I enjoy (dread feast!) the critic's rage,
And with the fell destroyer feed my page:
For what ambitious fools are more to blame,
Than those who thunder in the critic's name?
Good authors damned have their revenge in this,
To see what wretches gain the praise they miss.
Balbutius, muffled in his sable cloak,
Like an old druid from his hollow oak,
As ravens solemn, and as boding, cries,
'Ten thousand worlds for the three unities!'
Ye doctors sage! who through Parnassus teach,
Or quit the tub, or practise what you preach.
One judges as the weather dictates; right
The poem is at noon, and wrong at night:
Another judges by a surer gage,
An author's principles or parentage:
Since his great ancestors in Flanders fell,
The poem, doubtless, must be written well.
Another judges by the writer's look;
Another judges, for he bought the book:
Some judge, their knack of judging wrong to keep;
Some judge, because it is too soon to sleep.
Thus all will judge, and with one single aim,
To gain themselves, not give the writer, fame;
The very best ambitiously advise,
Half to serve you, and half to pass for wise.
Critics on verse, as squibs on triumphs wait,
Proclaim the glory, and augment the state:
Hot, envious, noisy, proud, the scribbling fry
Burn, hiss, and bounce, waste paper, stink, and die.

Rail on, my friends! what more my verse can crown
Than Compton's* smile, and your obliging frown?
Not all on books their criticism waste;
The genius of a dish some justly taste,
And eat their way to fame. With anxious thought
The salmon is refused, the turbot bought.
Impatient Art rebukes the sun's delay,
And bids December yield the fruits of May:
Their various cares in one great point combine
The business of their lives, that is—to dine!
Half of their precious day they give the feast,
And to a kind digestion spare the rest:
Abicius, here, the taster of the town,
Feeds twice a week to settle their renown,
These worthies of the palate guard with care
The sacred annals of their bills of fare;
In those choice books their panegyrics read,
And scorn the creatures that for hunger feed.
If man by feeding well commences great,
Much more the worm to whom that man is meat.
To glory some advance a lying claim,
Thieves of renown, and pilferers of fame:
Their front supplies what their ambition lacks;
They know a thousand lords behind their backs.
Cottil is apt to wink upon a peer,
When turned away, with a familiar leer;
And Hervey's* eyes, unmercifully keen,
Have murdered fops, by whom she ne'er was seen.
Niger adopts stray libels, wisely prone
To covet shame still greater than his own.
Bathyllus, in the winter of threescore,
Belies his innocence, and keeps a whore.
Absence of mind Brabantio turns to fame,
Learns to mistake, nor knows his brother's name;
Has words and thoughts in nice disorder set,
And takes a memorandum to forget.
Thus vain, not knowing what adorns or blots,
Men forge the patents that create them sots.
As love of pleasure into pain betrays,
So most grow infamous through love of praise.
But whence for praise can such an ardour rise,
When those who bring that incense we despise?
For such the vanity of great and small,
Contempt goes round, and all men laugh at all.
Nor can e'en satire blame them; for 'tis true
They have most ample cause for what they do.
O fruitful Britain! doubtless thou wast meant
A nurse of fools to stock the continent.
Though Phœbus and the Nine for ever mow,
Rank folly underneath the scythe will grow:
The plenteous harvest calls me forward still,
Till I surpass in length my lawyer's bill,
A Welch descent, which well-paid heralds damn,
Or, longer still, a Dutchman's epigram.
When, cloy'd, in fury I throw down my pen,
In comes a coxcomb, and I write again.

* Sir Spencer Compton. † Lady Hervey

See Tityrus, with merriment possessed,
Is burst with laughter ere he hears the jest:
What need he stay? for when the joke is o'er,
His teeth will be no whiter than before.
Is there of these, ye fair! so great a dearth,
That you need purchase monkeys for your mirth?
Some, vain of paintings, bid the world admire;
Of houses some; nay, houses that they hire:
Some (perfect wisdom!) of a beauteous wife,
And boast, like Cordeliers, a scourge for life.
Sometimes, through pride, the sexes change their airs,
My lord has vapours, and my lady swears;
Then, (stranger still!) on turning of the wind,
My lord wears breeches, and my lady's kind.
To show the strength and infamy of pride,
By all 'tis followed, and by all denied.
What numbers are there which at once pursue
Praise, and the glory to contemn it too?
Vincenna knows self-praise betrays to shame,
And therefore lays a stratagem for fame;
Makes his approach in Modesty's disguise,
To win applause, and takes it by surprise.
'To err,' says he, 'in small things, is my fate.'
You know your answer, 'He's exact in great.'
'My style,' says he, 'is rude and full of faults,'—
'But, oh! what sense! what energy of thoughts!'
That 'he wants algebra he must confess;—
But not a soul to give our arms success.'
(Ah! that's a hit indeed.) Vincenna cries;
'But who in heat of blood was ever wise?
I own 'twas wrong when thousands called me back,
To make that hopeless, ill-advised attack;
All say 'twas madness, nor dare I deny:
Sure never fool so well deserved to die.'
Could this deceive in others, to be free,
It ne'er, Vincenna! could deceive in thee,
Whose conduct is a comment to thy tongue,
So clear, the dullest can not take thee wrong:
Thou on one sleeve wilt thy revenue wear,
And haunt the court, without a prospect there.
Are these expedients for renown? confess
Thy little self, that I may scorn thee less.
Be wise, Vincenna, and the court forsake;
Our fortunes there nor thou, nor I, shall make.
E'en men of merit, ere their point they gain,
In hardy service make a long campaign;
Most manfully besiege their patron's gate,
And oft repulsed, as oft attack the great
With painful art, and application warm,
And take, at last, some little place by storm;
Enough to keep two shoes on Sunday clean,
And starve upon discreetly in Sheer Lane.
Already this thy fortune can afford,
Then starve without the favour of my lord.
'Tis true great fortunes some great men confer,
But often, e'en in doing right, they err:
From caprice, not from choice, their favours come;
They give, but think it toil to know to whom:
The man that's nearest, yawning, they advance:
'Tis inhumanity to bless by chance.
If Merit sues, and Greatness is so loth
To break its downy trance, I pity both.
I grant at court Philander, at his need,
(Thanks to his lovely wife) finds friends indeed:
Of every charm and virtue she's possessed:
Philander! thou art exquisitely blessed;
The public envy! Now, then, 'tis allowed
The man is found who may be justly proud:
But, see! how sickly is Ambition's taste?
Ambition feeds on trash, and loaths a feast;
For, lo! Philander, of reproach afraid,
In secret loves his wife, but keeps her maid.
Some nymphs sell reputation, others buy,
And love a market where the rates run high.
Italian music's sweet, because 'tis dear;
Their vanity is tickled, not their ear:
Their tastes would lessen if the prices fell,
And Shakspeare's wretched stuff do quite as well:
Away the disinchanted fair would throng,
And own that English is their mother-tongue.
To show how much our northern tastes refine,
Imported nymphs our peeresses outshine:
While tradesmen starve, these Philomels are gay;
For generous lords had rather give than pay.
Behold the masquerade's fantastic scene!
The Legislature joined with Drury Lane!
When Briton calls, the embroidered patriots run,
And serve their country—if the dance is done.
'Are we not then allowed to be polite?'—
Yes, doubtless; but first set your notions right.
Worth of politeness is the needful ground;
Where that is wanting, this can ne'er be found.
Triflers not e'en in trifles can excel;
'Tis solid bodies only polish well.
Great, chosen prophet! for these latter days,
To turn a willing world from righteous ways!
Well, Heidegger,* dost thou thy master serve;
Well has he seen his servant should not starve:
Thou to his name hast splendid temples raised,
In various forms of worship seen him praised;
Gaudy devotion, like a Roman, shown,
And sung sweet anthems in a tongue unknown.
Inferior offerings to thy god of Vice
Are duly paid in fiddles, cards, and dice;
Thy sacrifice supreme, an hundred maids;
That solemn rite of midnight masquerades!
If maids the quite exhausted town denies,
A hundred head of cuckolds may suffice.
Thou smil'st, well pleased with the converted land
To see the fifty churches† at a stand.
And that thy minister may never fail,
But what thy hand has planted still prevail,

* Director of the masquerades.

† Fifty new churches, in and about London and Westminster, were voted by the House of Commons to be built in 1711 on a recommendation of Queen Anne.

Of minor prophets, a succession sure,
The propagation of thy zeal secure.
See Commons, Peers, and Ministers of State,
In solemn council met, and deep debate!
What godlike enterprise is taking birth?
What wonder opens on the expecting earth?
'Tis done! with loud applause the council rings!
Fixed is the fate of whores and fiddle-strings!
Though bold these truths, thou, Muse! with truths like these
Wilt none offend whom 'tis a praise to please:
Let others flatter to be flattered, thou,
Like just tribunals, bend an awful brow.
How terrible it were to common sense
To write a satire which gave none offence?
And since from life I take the draughts you see,
If men dislike them, do they censure me?
The fool and knave 'tis glorious to offend,
And godlike an attempt the world to mend;
The world, where lucky throws to blockheads fall,
Knaves know the game, and honest men pay all.
How hard for real worth to gain its price?
A man shall make his fortune in a trice,
If blessed with pliant, though but slender sense,
Feigned modesty, and real impudence,
A supple knee, smooth tongue, an easy grace,
A curse within, a smile upon his face.
A beauteous sister, or convenient wife,
Are prizes in the lottery of life;
Genius and virtue they will soon defeat,
And lodge you in the bosom of the great.
To merit is but to provide a pain,
From men's refusing what you ought to gain.
May, Dodington! this maxim fail in you,
Whom my presaging thoughts already view,
By Walpole's conduct fired, and friendship graced,
Still higher in your prince's favour placed,
And lending, here, those awful councils aid,
Which you, abroad, with such success obeyed;
Bear this from one who holds your friendship dear;
What most we wish, with ease we fancy near.

SATIRE IV.

TO THE RIGHT HON. SIR SPENCER COMPTON.*

ROUND some fair tree the ambitious woodbine grows,
And breathes her sweets on the supporting boughs:
So sweet the verse, the ambitious verse, should be,
(O! pardon mine) that hopes support from thee;
Thee, Compton! born o'er senates to preside,
Their dignity to raise, their councils guide;
Deep to discern, and widely to survey,
And kingdoms' fates, without ambition weigh;
Of distant virtues nice extremes to blend,
The crown's assertor, and the people's friend
Nor dost thou scorn, amidst sublimer views,
To listen to the labours of the Muse;
Thy smiles protect her, while thy talents fire,
And 'tis but half thy glory to inspire.
Vexed at a public fame so justly won,
The jealous Chremes is with spleen undone;
Chremes, for airy pensions of renown,
Devotes his service to the state and crown:
All schemes he knows, and, knowing, all improves;
Though Britain's thankless, still this patriot loves:
But patriots differ; some may shed their blood,
He drinks his coffee, for the public good;
Consults the sacred steam, and there foresees
What storms or sunshine Providence decrees;
Knows for each day the weather of our fate:
A quidnunc is an almanack of state.
You smile, and think this statesman void of use;
Why may not time his secret worth produce?
Since apes can roast the choice Castanian nut
Since steeds of genius are expert at *putt*,
Since half the senate *Not Content* can say,
Geese nations save, and puppies plots betray.
What makes him model realms and counsel kings?—
An incapacity for smaller things.
Poor Chremes can't conduct his own estate,
And thence has undertaken Europe's fate.
Gehenno leaves the realms to Chremes' skill,
And boldly claims a province higher still:
To raise a name, the ambitious boy has got
At once, a Bible, and a shoulder-knot:
Deep in the secret, he looks through the whole,
And pities the dull rogue that saves his soul:
To talk with reverence you must take good heed,
Nor shock his tender reason with the creed:
Howe'er well-bred, in public he complies,
Obliging friends alone with blasphemies.
Peerage is poison; good estates are bad
For this disease; poor rogues run seldom mad.
Have not attainders brought unhoped relief,
And falling stocks quite cured an unbelief?
While the sun shines, Blunt talks with wondrous force;
But thunder mars small beer and weak discourse:
Such useful instruments the weather show,
Just as their mercury is high or low.
Health chiefly keeps an atheist in the dark,
A fever argues better than a Clarke:
Let but the logic in his pulse decay,
The Grecian he'll renounce, and learn to pray.
While Collins* mourns, with an unfeigned zeal,
The apostate youth who reasoned once so well
Collins, who makes so merry with the creed,
He almost thinks he disbelieves indeed;

* Speaker of the House of Commons; afterwards created Viscount Peveney, and Earl of Wilmington.

* Anthony Collins, founder of the sect of Free-thinkers.

But only thinks so: to give both their due,
Satan and he believe, and tremble too.
Of some for glory such the boundless rage,
That they're the blackest scandal of their age.
Narcissus the Tartarian club disclaims;
Nay, a free-mason with some terror names;
Omits no duty; nor can Envy say
He missed, these many years, the church or play:
He makes no noise in parliament, 'tis true,
But pays his debts, and visit, when 'tis due;
His character and gloves are ever clean,
And then he can outbow the bowing Dean:
A smile eternal on his lip he wears,
Which equally the wise and worthless shares.
In gay fatigues, this most undaunted chief,
Patient of idleness beyond belief,
Most charitably lends the town his face,
For ornament in every public place:
As sure as cards he to the assembly comes,
And is the furniture of drawing-rooms:
When ombre calls, his hand and heart are free,
And, joined to two, he fails not—to make three.
Narcissus is the glory of his race,
For who does nothing with a better grace?
To deck my list by Nature were designed
Such shining expletives of human kind,
Who want, while through blank life they dream along,
Sense to be right, and passion to be wrong.
To counterpoise this hero of the mode,
Some for renown are singular and odd;
What other men dislike is sure to please,
Of all mankind, these dear antipodes:
Through pride, not malice, they run counter still,
And birth-days are their days of dressing ill.
Arbuthnot is a fool, and Foe a sage,
Sedley will fright you, Etherege engage:
By Nature streams run backward, flame descends,
Stones mount, and Sussex is the worst of friends.
They take their rest by day, and wake by night,
And blush if you surprise them in the right
If they by chance blurt out, ere well aware
A swan is white, or Queensberry* is fair.
Nothing exceeds in ridicule, no doubt,
A fool *in* fashion, but a fool that's *out;*
His passion for absurdity's so strong,
He can not bear a rival in the wrong.
'Though wrong the mode, comply: more sense is shown
In wearing others' follies than your own.
If what is out of fashion most you prize,
Methinks you should endeavour to be wise.
But what in oddness can be more sublime
Than Sloane,† the foremost toyman of his time?
His nice ambition lies in curious fancies,
His daughter's portion a rich shell enhances,
And Ashmole's baby-house* is, in his view,
Britannia's golden mine, a rich Peru!
How his eyes languish! how his thoughts adore
That painted coat which Joseph never wore!
He shows, on holidays, a sacred pin
That touched the ruff that touched Queen Bess's chin.
'Since that great dearth our chronicles deplore,
Since the great plague that swept as many more,
Was ever year unblessed as this?' he'll cry
'It has not brought us one new butterfly!'
In times that suffer such learned men as these,
Unhappy Jersey! how came you to please?
'Not gaudy butterflies are Lico's game,
But in effect his chase is much the same:
Warm in pursuit, he levées all the great,
Staunch to the foot of title and estate:
Where'er their lordships go, they never find
Or Lico, or their shadows, lag behind;
He sets them sure, where'er their lordships run,
Close at their elbows, as a morning-dun;
As if their grandeur by contagion wrought,
And fame was, like a fever, to be caught:
And after seven years' dance from place to place,
The Dane† is more familiar with his Grace.
Who'd be a crutch to prop a rotten peer,
Or living pendent dangling at his ear,
For ever whispering secrets, which were blown
For months before, by trumpets, through the Town?
Who'd be a glass, with flattering grimace,
Still to reflect the temper of his face?
Or happy pin to stick upon his sleeve,
When my lord's gracious, and vouchsafes it leave?
Or cushion, when his heaviness shall please
To loll or thump it, for his better ease?
Or a vile butt, for noon or night bespoke,
When the peer rashly swears he'll club his joke?
Who'd shake with laughter, though he could not find
His lordship's jest, or, if his nose broke wind,
For blessing to the gods profoundly bow?
That can cry chimney-sweep, or drive a plough?
With terms like these how mean the tribe that close?
Scarce meaner they who terms like these impose.
But what's the tribe most likely to comply?
The men of ink, or ancient authors, lie;
The writing tribe, who, shameless auctions hold
Of praise, by inch of candle to be sold;
All men they flatter, but themselves the most,
With deathless fame their everlasting boast:
For Fame no cully makes so much her jest,
As her old constant spark, the bard professed.

* The Dutchess of Queensberry, a celebrated toast.
† Sir Hans Sloane, whose collections enrich our Museum.

* The Ashmolean Museum at Oxford.
† A Danish dog belonging to the Duke of Argyle.

Boyle* shines in council, Mordaunt† in the fight,
Pelham's‡ magnificent, but I can write;
And what to my great soul like glory dear?
Till some god whispers in his tingling ear,
That fame's unwholesome taken without meat,
And life is best sustained by what is eat:
Grown lean and wise, he curses what he writ,
And wishes all his wants were in his wit.

Ah! what avails it, when his dinner's lost
That his triumphant name adorns a post?
Or that his shining page (provoking fate)
Defends surloins, which sons of Dulness eat?

What foe to verse without compassion hears,
What cruel prose-man can refrain from tears,
When the poor Muse, for less than half a crown,
A prostitute on every bulk in town,
With other whores undone, though not in print,
Clubs credit for geneva in the Mint?

Ye bards! why will you sing, though uninspired?
Ye bards! why will you starve to be admired?
Defunct by Phœbus' laws, beyond redress,
Why will your spectres haunt the frighted press?
Bad metre, that excrescence of the head,
Like hair, will sprout, although the poet's dead.

All other trades demand, verse-makers beg:
A dedication is a wooden leg;
A barren Labeo, the true mumper's fashion,
Exposes borrowed brats to move compassion.
Though such myself, vile bards I discommend;
Nay more, though gentle Damon is my friend.
'Is't then a crime to write?'—If talent rare
Proclaim the god, the crime is to forbear:
For some, though few, there are, large-minded men,
Who watch unseen the labours of the pen;
Who know the Muse's worth, and therefore court,
Their deeds her theme, their bounty her support;
Who serve, unasked, the least pretence to wit,
My sole excuse, alas! for having writ.
Argyle true wit is studious to restore,
And Dorset smiles, if Phœbus smiled before;
Pembroke in years the long-loved arts admires,
And Henrietta§ like a Muse inspires.

But, ah! not inspiration can obtain
That fame which poets languish for in vain.
How mad their aim who thirst for glory, strive
To grasp what no man can possess alive?
Fame's a reversion, in which men take place
(O late reversion!) at their own decease:
This truth sagacious Lintot knows so well,
He starves his authors that their works may sell.

That fame is wealth, fantastic poets cry;
That wealth is fame, another can reply,
Who knows no guilt, no scandal but in rags,
And swell in just proportion to their bags.

Nor only the low-born, deformed and old,
Think glory nothing but the beams of gold:
The first young lord which in the Mall you meet,
Shall match the veriest hunks in Lombard street,
From rescued candles' ends who raised a sum,
And starves, to join a penny to a plum.
A beardless miser! 'tis a guilt unknown
To former times, a scandal all our own.

Of ardent lovers, the true modern band
Will mortgage Celia to redeem their land.
For love, young, noble, rich Castalio dies;
Name but the fair, love swells into his eyes.
Divine Monimia, thy fond fears lay down,
No rival can prevail,—but half a crown.
He glories to late times to be conveyed,
Not for the poor he has relieved, but made:
Not such ambition his great fathers fired,
When Harry conquered, and half France expired.
He'd be a slave, a pimp, a dog, for gain;
Nay, a dull sheriff for his golden chain.

'Who'd be a slave?' the gallant colonel cries,
While love of glory sparkles from his eyes:
To deathless fame he loudly pleads his right,—
Just is his title,—for he will not fight.
All soldiers valour, all divines have grace,
As maids of honour beauty,—by their place:
But when, indulging on the last campaign,
His lofty terms climb o'er the hills of slain,
He gives the foes he slew, at each vain word,
A sweet revenge, and half absolves his sword.

Of boasting more than of a bomb afraid,
A soldier should be modest as a maid.
Fame is a bubble the reserved enjoy;
Who strive to grasp it, as they touch, destroy:
'Tis the world's debt to deeds of high degree,
But if you pay yourself, the world is free.

Were there no tongue to speak them but his own,
Augustus'* deeds in arms had ne'er been known,
Augustus' deeds, if that ambiguous name
Confounds my reader, and misguides his aim,
Such is the prince's worth of whom I speak,
The Roman would not blush at the mistake

SATIRE V.

ON WOMEN.

O fairest of creation! last and best
Of all God's works! creature in whom excelled
Whatever can to sight or thought be formed
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet,
How art thou lost?—— *Milton.*

Nor reigns ambition in bold man alone;
Soft female hearts the rude invader own:
But there, indeed, it deals in nicer things,
Than routing armies and dethroning kings.

* Earl of Orrery. † Earl of Petersborough.
‡ Duke of Newcastle.
§ Lady Henrietta Cavendish Holles Harley.

* Applied to George the First

Attend, and you discern it in the fair
Conduct a finger, or reclaim a hair,
Or roll the lucid orbit of an eye,
Or in full joy elaborate a sigh.
The sex we honour, though their faults we blame,
Nay, thank their faults for such a fruitful theme:
A theme fair ****! doubly kind to me,
Since satirizing those is praising thee;
Who would'st not bear, too modestly refined,
A panegyric of a grosser kind.
Britannia's daughters, much more fair than nice,
Too fond of admiration, lose their price;
Worn in the public eye, give cheap delight
To throngs, and tarnish to the sated sight:
As unreserved and beauteous as the sun,
Through every sign of vanity they run;
Assemblies, parks, course feasts in city-halls,
Lectures and trials, plays, committees, balls;
Wells, bedlams, executions, Smithfield scenes,
And fortune-tellers' caves and lions' dens;
Taverns, exchanges, bridewells, drawing-rooms,
Instalments, pillories, coronations, tombs,
Tumblers and funeral, puppet-shows, reviews,
Sales, races, rabbets, (and, still stranger!) pews.
Clarinda's bosom burns, but burns for fame,
And love lies vanquished in a nobler flame;
Warm gleams of hope she now dispenses; then,
Like April suns, dives into clouds again:
With all her lustre now her lover warms,
Then, out of ostentation, hides her charms.
'Tis next her pleasure sweetly to complain,
And to be taken with a sudden pain;
Then she starts up, all ecstacy and bliss,
And is, sweet soul! just as sincere in this:
O how she rolls her charming eyes, in spite!
And looks delightfully, with all her might!
But, like our heroes, much more brave than wise,
She conquers for the triumph, not the prize.
Zara resembles Ætna crowned with snows,
Without she freezes, and within she glows:
Twice ere the sun descends, with zeal inspired,
From the vain converse of the world retired,
She reads the psalms and chapters for the day,
In——Cleopatra, or the last new play.
Thus gloomy Zara, with a solemn grace,
Deceives mankind, and hides behind her face.
Nor far beneath her in renown is she
Who, through good-breeding, is ill company;
Whose manners will not let her larum cease,
Who thinks you are unhappy when at peace;
To find you news who racks her subtle head,
And vows—that her great-grandfather is dead.
A dearth of words a woman need not fear,
But 'tis a task indeed to learn—to hear;
In that the skill of conversation lies;
That shows, and makes, you both polite and wise.
Xantippe cries, 'Let nymphs who nought can say
Be lost in silence, and resign the day;
And let the guilty wife her guilt confess
By tame behaviour, and a soft address.'
Through virtue, she refuses to comply
With all the dictates of humanity;
Through wisdom, she refuses to submit
To wisdom's rules, and raves to prove her wit;
Then, her unblemished honour to maintain,
Rejects her husband's kindness with disdain;
But if, by chance, an ill-adapted word
Drops from the lip of her unwary lord,
Her darling china, in a whirlwind sent,
Just intimates the lady's discontent.
Wine may indeed excite the meekest dame,
But keen Zantippe, scorning borrowed flame,
Can vent her thunders, and her lightning play,
O'er cooling gruel, and composing tea;
Nor rests by night, but more sincere than nice,
She shakes the curtains with her kind advice:
Doubly, like echo, sound is her delight,
And the last word is her eternal right.
Is 't not enough plagues, wars, and famines, rise
To lash our crimes,—but must our wives be wise?
Famine, plague, war, and an unnumbered throng
Of guilt-avenging ills, to man belong.
What black, what ceaseless cares besiege our state?
What strokes we feel from Fancy and from Fate?
If Fate forbears us, Fancy strikes the blow;
We make misfortune; suicides in wo.
Superfluous aid! unnecessary skill?
Is Nature backward to torment or kill!
How oft the noon, how oft the midnight bell,
(That iron tongue of Death!) with solemn knell,
On Folly's errands, as we vainly roam,
Knocks at our hearts, and finds our thoughts from home?
Men drop so fast, ere life's mid stage we tread,
Few know so many friends alive as dead;
Yet, as immortal, in our up-hill chase
We press coy Fortune with unslackened pace;
Our ardent labours for the toys we seek,
Join night to day, and Sunday to the week:
Our very joys are anxious, and expire
Between satiety and fierce desire.
Now what reward for all this grief and toil?
But one; a female friend's endearing smile;
A tender smile, our sorrows' only balm,
And in life's tempest the sad sailor's calm.
How have I seen a gentle nymph draw nigh,
Peace in her air, persuasion in her eye;
Victorious tenderness! it all o'ercame,
Husbands looked mild, and savages grew tame.
The sylvan race our active nymphs pursue,
Man is not all the game they have in view;
In woods and fields their glory they complete
There Master Betty leaps a five barred gate;
While fair Miss Charles to toilettes is confined,
Nor rashly tempts the barbarous sun and wind.
Some nymphs affect a more heroic breed,
And vault from hunters to the managed steed;

Command his prancings with a martial air,
And Fobert* has the forming of the fair.
More than one steed must Delia's empire feel,
Who sits triumphant o'er the flying wheel.
And as she guides it through the admiring throng,
With what an air she smacks the silken thong?
Graceful as John, she moderates the reins,
And whistles sweet her diuretic strains:
Sesostris-like, such charioteers as these
May drive six harnessed monarchs if they please:
They drive, row, run, with love of glory smit,
Leap, swim, shoot flying, and pronounce on wit.
O'er the belle-lettres lovely Daphne reigns;
Again the god Apollo wears her chains;
With legs tossed high, on her sophée she sits,
Vouchsafing audience to contending wits:
Of each performance she 's the final test;
One act read o'er, she prophecies the rest;
And then, pronouncing with decisive air,
Fully convinces all the town—she 's fair.
Had lovely Daphne Hecatessa's face,
How would her elegance of taste decrease!
Some ladies' judgment in their features lies,
And all their genius sparkles from their eyes.
'But hold,' she cries, 'lampooner! have a care;
Must I want common sense because I'm fair?'
O no; see Stella; her eyes shine as bright
As if her tongue was never in the right;
And yet what real learning, judgment, fire!
She seems inspired, and can herself inspire:
How then (if malice ruled not all the fair)
Could Daphne publish, and could she forbear?
We grant that beauty is no bar to sense,
Nor is 't a sanction for impertinence.
Sempronia liked her man, and well she might;
The youth in person and in parts was bright:
Possessed of every virtue, grace, and art,
That claims just empire o'er the female heart:
He met her passion, all her sighs returned,
And in full rage of youthful ardour burned:
Large his possessions, and beyond her own,
Their bliss the theme and envy of the town:
The day was fixed, when, with one acre more,
In stepped deformed, debauched, diseased Threescore!
The fatal sequel I, through shame, forbear.
Of pride and avarice who can cure the fair?
Man's rich with little, were his judgment true;
Nature is frugal, and her wants are few;
Those few wants answered, bring sincere delights,
But fools create themselves new appetites.
Fancy and pride seek things at vast expense,
Which relish not to reason, nor to sense.
When surfeit or unthankfulness destroys,
In Nature's narrow sphere, our solid joys,
In Fancy's airy land of noise and show,
Where nought but dreams, no real pleasures grow,
Like cats in air-pumps, to subsist we strive
On joys too thin to keep the soul alive.
Lemira's sick; make haste; the doctor call;
He comes: but where's his patient? at the ball.
The doctor stares; her woman curtsies low,
And cries, 'My lady, sir, is always so:
Diversions put her maladies to flight;
True, she can't stand, but she can dance all night;
I've known my lady (for she loves a tune)
For fevers take an opera in June:
And though, perhaps, you'll think the practice bold,
A midnight park is sovereign for a cold:
With cholics breakfasts of green fruit agree,
With indigestions supper just at three.'
'A strange alternative,' replies Sir Hans;*
Must women have a doctor or a dance?
Though sick to death, abroad they safely roam,
But droop and die, in perfect health, at home.
For want—but not of health, are ladies ill,
And tickets cure beyond the doctor's bill.'
Alas, my heart! how languishingly fair
Yon lady lolls! with what a tender air?
Pale as a young dramatic author, when
O'er darling lines fell Cibber waves his pen.
Is her lord angry, or has Veny† chid?
Dead is her father, or the mask forbid?
Late sitting up has turned her roses white.
Why went she not to bed? 'Because 'twas night.'
Did she then dance or play? 'Nor this nor that.'
Well, night soon steals away in pleasing chat.
'No, all alone her prayers she rather chose,
Than be that wretch to sleep till morning rose.'
Then lady Cynthia, mistress of the shade,
Goes with the fashionable owls to bed:
This her pride covets, this her health denies;
Her soul is silly, but her body's wise.

Others, with curious art, dim charms revive,
And triumph in the bloom of fifty-five.
You, in the morning, a fair nymph invite,
To keep her word, a brown one comes at night;
Next day she shines in glossy black, and then
Revolves into her native red again:
Like a dove's neck she shifts her transient charms,
And is her own dear rival in your arms.

But one admirer has the painted lass,
Nor finds that one but in her looking-glass:
Yet Laura's beautiful to such excess,
That all her arts scarce makes her please us less.
To deck the female cheek he only knows
Who paints less fair the lily and the rose.

How gay they smile? Such blessings Nature pours,
O'erstocked mankind enjoy but half her stores:
In distant wilds, by human eyes unseen,
She rears her flowers, and spreads her velvet green.

* A celebrated riding-master.

* Sir Hans Sloane, M. D. † Her lapdog.

Pure gurgling rills the lonely desert trace,
And waste their music on the savage race.
Is Nature then a niggard of her bliss?
Repine we guiltless in a world like this?
But our lewd tastes her lawful charms refuse,
And painted Arts depraved allurements choose.
Such Fulvia's passion for the town: fresh air
(An odd effect!) gives vapours to the fair;
Green fields, and shady groves, and crystal springs,
And larks, and nightingales, are odious things;
But smoke, and dust, and noise, and crowds delight,
And to be pressed to death transports her quite.
Where silver rivulets play through flowery meads,
And woodbines give their sweets, and limes their shades,
Black kennels' absent odours she regrets,
And stops her nose at beds of violets.
Is stormy life preferred to the serene:
Or is the public to the private scene?
Retired, we tread a smooth and open way,
Through briars and brambles in the world we stray;
Stiff opposition, and perplexed debate,
And thorny care, and rank and stinging hate,
Which choke our passage, our career control,
And wound the firmest temper of our soul,
O sacred Solitude! divine retreat!
Choice of the prudent: envy of the great:
By thy pure stream, or in thy waving shade,
We court fair Wisdom, that celestial maid;
The genuine offspring of her loved embrace,
(Strangers on earth!) are Innocence and Peace:
There from the ways of men laid safe ashore,
We smile to hear the distant tempest roar;
There blessed with health, with business unperplexed,
This life we relish, and insure the next:
There too the Muses sport: these numbers free,
Pierian Eastbury! I owe to thee.
There sport the muses, but not there alone;
Their sacred force Amelia feels in town.
Nought but a genius can a genius fit;
A wit herself, Amelia weds a wit:
Both wits; though miracles are said to cease,
Three days, three wondrous days! they lived in peace;
With the fourth sun a warm dispute arose
On Durfey's poësy, and Bunyan's prose:
The learned war both wage with equal force,
And the fifth morn concluded the divorce.
Phœbe, though she possesses nothing less,
Is proud of being rich in happiness;
Laboriously pursues delusive toys,
Content with pains, since they're reputed joys.
With what well-acted transport will she say,
'Well, sure we were so happy yesterday!
And then that charming party for to-morrow!'
Though well she knows 'twill languish into sorrow:
But she dares never boast the present hour;
So gross that cheat, it is beyond her power:
For such is or our weakness or our curse,
Or rather such our crime, which still is worse,
The present moment, like a wife, we shun,
And ne'er enjoy, because it is our own.
Pleasures are few, and fewer we enjoy;
Pleasure, like quicksilver, is bright and coy;
We strive to grasp it with our utmost skill,
Still it eludes us, and it glitters still;
If seized at last, compute your mighty gains;
What is it but rank poison in your veins?
As Flavia in her glass an angel spies,
Pride whispers in her ear pernicious lies;
Tells her, while she surveys a face so fine,
There's no satiety of charms divine:
Hence, if her lover yawns, all changed appears
Her temper, and she melts (sweet soul!) in tears:
She, fond and young, last week her wish enjoyed,
In soft amusement all the night employed;
The morning came, when Strephon, waking, found
(Surprising sight!) his bride in sorrow drowned;
'What miracle,' says Strephon, 'makes thee weep?'
'Ah, barbarous man,' she cries, 'how could you—sleep?'

Men love a mistress as they love a feast;
How grateful one to touch, and one to taste?
Yet sure there is a certain time of day
We wish our mistress and our meat away:
But soon the sated appetites return,
Again our stomachs crave, our bosoms burn:
Eternal love let man, then, never swear!
Let women never triumph nor despair;
Nor praise nor blame, too much, the warm or chill:
Hunger and love are foreign to the will.

There is, indeed, a passion more refined,
For those few nymphs whose charms are o' the mind;
But not of that unfashionable set
Is Phyllis; Phyllis and her Damon met.
Eternal love exactly hits her taste;
Phyllis demands eternal love at least.
Embracing Phyllis with soft smiling eyes,
'Eternal love I vow,' the swain replies;
'But say, my all, my mistress, and my friend!
What day next week the eternity shall end?'

Some nymphs prefer astronomy to love,
Elope from mortal man, and range above.
The fair philosopher to Rowley* flies,
Where, in a box, the whole creation lies.
She sees the planets in their turns advance,
And scorns, Poitier! thy sublunary dance:
Of Desaguliers she bespeaks fresh air,
And Whiston has engagements with the fair.
What vain experiments Sophronia tries!
'Tis not in air-pumps the gay col'nel dies.
But though to-day this rage of science reigns,
(O fickle sex!) soon end her learned pains.

* An eminent mathematical instrument-maker.

Lo! pug from Jupiter her heart has got,
Turns out the stars, and Newton is a sot.
To * * * * turn; she never took the height
Of Saturn, yet is ever in the right:
She strikes each point with native force of mind,
While puzzled learning blunders far behind.
Graceful to sight, and elegant to thought,
The great are vanquished, and the wise are taught.
Her breeding finished, and her temper sweet,
When serious easy, and when gay discreet;
In glittering scenes, o'er her own heart severe,
In crowds collected, and in courts sincere;
Sincere and warm, with zeal well understood,
She takes a noble pride in doing good;
Yet not superior to her sex's cares,
The mode she fixes by the gown she wears;
Of silks and china she's the last appeal:
In these great points she leads the commonweal;
And if disputes of empire rise between
Mechlin the queen of lace, and Colberteen,
'Tis doubt! 'tis darkness! till suspended Fate
Assumes her nod, to close the grand debate.
When such her mind, why will the fair express
Their emulation only in their dress?

But, oh! the nymph that mounts above the skies,
And, *gratis*, clears religious mysteries,
Resolved the church's welfare to insure,
And make her family a sinecure;
The theme divine at cards she'll not forget,
But talks in texts of Scripture at picquet;
In those licentious meetings acts the prude,
And thanks her Maker that her cards are good.
What angels would these be, who thus excel
In theologics, could they sew as well!
Yet why should not the fair her text pursue?
Can she more decently the doctor woo?
'Tis hard, too, she who makes no use but chat
Of her religion, should be barred in that.

Isaac, a brother of the canting strain,
When he has knocked at his own skull in vain,
To beauteous Marcia often will repair
With a dark text, to light it at the fair.
O how his pious soul exults to find
Such love for holy men in womankind?
Charmed with her learning, with what rapture he
Hangs on her bloom, like an industrious bee;
Hums round about her, and with all his power
Extracts sweet wisdom from so fair a flower?

The young and gay declining, Appia flies
At nobler game, the mighty and the wise:
By Nature more an eagle than a dove,
She impiously prefers the world to love.

Can wealth give happiness? look round and see
What gay distress! what splendid misery!
Whatever Fortune lavishly can pour,
The mind annihilates, and calls for more.
Wealth is a cheat; believe not what it says;
Like any lord it promises—and pays.

How will the miser startle to be told
Of such a wonder as insolvent gold?
What Nature wants has an intrinsic weight,
All more is but the fashion of the plate,
Which for one moment charms the fickle view;
It charms us now, anon we cast a new,
To some fresh birth of fancy more inclined;
Then wed not acres, but a noble mind.

Mistaken lovers, who make worth their care,
And think accomplishments will win the fair;
The fair, 'tis true, by genius should be won,
As flowers unfold their beauties to the sun;
And yet in female scales a fop outweighs,
And wit must wear the willow and the bays.
Nought shines so bright in vain Liberia's eye
As riot, impudence, and perfidy:
The youth of fire, that has drunk deep, and played,
And killed his man, and triumphed o'er his maid,
For him as yet unhanged, she spreads her charms,
Snatches the dear destroyer to her arms,
And amply gives, (though treated long amiss
The man of merit his revenge in this.
If you resent, and wish a woman ill;
But turn her o'er one moment to her will.

The languid lady next appears in state,
Who was not born to carry her own weight;
She lolls, reels, staggers, till some foreign aid
To her own stature lifts the feeble maid;
Then, if ordained to so severe a doom,
She, by just stages, journeys round the room;
But, knowing her own weakness, she despairs
To scale the Alps—that is, ascend the stairs.
'My fan!' let others say, who laugh at toil;
'Fan! hood! glove! scarf!' is her laconic style.
And that is spoke with such a dying fall,
That Betty rather sees than hears the call!
The motion of her lips, and meaning eye,
Piece out the idea her faint words deny.
O listen with attention most profound!
Her voice is but the shadow of a sound,
And help! oh, help! her spirits are so dead,
One hand scarce lifts the other to her head;
If there a stubborn pin it triumphs o'er,
She pants! she sinks away! and is no more.
Let the robust, and the gigantic, carve,
Life is not worth so much; she'd rather starve:
But chew she must herself: ah, cruel fate!
That Rosalinda cant by proxy eat.

An antidote in female caprice lies
(Kind Heaven! against the poison of their eyes
Thalestris triumphs in a manly mien;
Loud is her accent, and her phrase obscene.
In fair and open dealing where's the shame?
What Nature dares to give, she dares to name
This honest fellow is sincere and plain,
And justly gives the jealous husband pain
(Vain is the task to petticoats assigned,
If wanton language shows a naked mind,)

And now and then, to grace her eloquence,
An oath supplies the vacancies of sense.
Hark! the shrill notes transpierce the yielding air,
And teach the neighbouring echos how to swear.
'By Jove,' is faint, and for the simple swain;
She, on the Christian system is profane:
But though the volley rattles in your ear,
Believe her dress, she 's not a grenadier.
If thunder 's awful, how much more our dread,
When Jove deputes a lady in her stead?
A lady! pardon my mistaken pen;
A shameless woman is the worst of men.
Few to good-breeding make a just pretence;
Good-breeding is the blossom of good sense;
The last result of an accomplished mind,
With outward grace, the body's virtue, joined.
A violated decency now reigns,
And nymphs for failings take peculiar pains.
With Chinese painters modern toasts agree,
The point they aim at is deformity;
They throw their persons with a hoyden air,
Across the room, and toss into the chair.
So far their commerce with mankind is gone,
They for our manners have exchanged their own.
The modest look, the castigated grace,
The gentle movement, and slow measured pace,
For which her lovers died, her parents prayed,
Are indecorums with the modern maid.
Stiff forms are bad; but let not worse intrude,
Nor conquer art and nature to be rude.
Modern good-breeding carry to its height,
And Lady D—'s* self will be polite.
Ye rising Fair! ye bloom of Britain's isle!
When high-born Anna, with a softened smile,
Leads on your train, and sparkles at your head,
What seems most hard is not to be well-bred:
Her bright example with success pursue,
And all but adoration is your due.
'But adoration! give me something more,'—
Cries Lyce, on the borders of threescore.
Nought treads so silent as the foot of Time;
Hence we mistake our autumn for our prime.
'Tis greatly wise to know, before we 're told,
The melancholy news that we grow old.
Autumnal Lyce carries in her face
Memento mori to each public place.
O how your beating breast a mistress warms,
Who looks through spectacles to see your charms!
While rival undertakers hover round,
And with his spade the sexton marks the ground;
Intent not on her own, but others' doom,
She plans new conquests, and defrauds the tomb,
In vain the cock has summoned sprites away,
She walks at noon, and blasts the bloom of day;
Nay rainbow-silks her mellow charms infold,
And nought of Lyce but herself is old:
Her grizzled locks assume a smirking grace,
And art has levelled her deep furrowed face:
Her strange demand no mortal can approve;
We 'll ask her blessing, but can't ask her love:
She grants, indeed, a lady may decline
(All ladies but herself) at ninety-nine.
O how unlike her was the sacred age
Of prudent Portia! her gray hairs engage;
Whose thoughts are suited to her life's decline:
Virtues 's the paint that can make wrinkles shine:
That, and that only, can old age sustain,
Which yet all wish, nor know they wish for pain.
Not numerous are our joys when life is new,
And yearly some are falling of the few;
But when we conquer life's meridian stage,
And downward tend into the vale of age,
They drop apace: by nature some decay,
And some the blasts of fortune sweep away;
Till naked quite of happiness, aloud
We call for death, and shelter in a shroud.
Where 's Portia now?—But Portia left behind
Two lovely copies of her form and mind.
What heart untouched their early grief can view,
Like blushing rose-buds dipped in morning dew?
Who into shelter takes their tender bloom,
And forms their minds to flee from ills to come?
The mind, when turned adrift, no rules to guide,
Drives at the mercy of the wind and tide;
Fancy and passion toss it to and fro,
A while torment, and then quite sink in wo.
Ye beauteous orphans! since in silent dust
Your best example lies, my precepts trust,
Life swarms with ills; the boldest are afraid;
Where then is safety for a tender maid?
Unfit for conflict, round beset with woes,
And man, whom least she fears, her worst of foes
When kind, most cruel; when obliged the most,
The least obliging; and by favours lost:
Cruel by nature, they for kindness hate,
And scorn you for those ills themselves create.
If on your fame our sex a blot has thrown,
'Twill ever stick, through malice of your own.
Most hard! in pleasing your chief glory lies,
And yet from pleasing your chief dangers rise:
Then please the best; and know, for men of sense
Your strongest charms are native innocence.
Arts on the mind, like paint upon the face,
Frights him that 's worth your love from your embrace.
In simple manners all the secret lies;
Be kind and virtuous, you 'll be blest and wise.
Vain show and noise intoxicate the brain,
Begin with giddiness, and end in pain.
Affect not empty fame and idle praise,
Which all those wretches I describe betrays.
Your sex's glory 'tis to shine unknown;
Of all applause be fondest of your own.
Beware the fever of the mind; that thirst
With which the age is eminently cursed:

* Dashwood or Dysart supposed.

To drink of pleasure but inflames desire,
And abstinence alone can quench the fire;
Take pain from life, and terror from the tomb,
Give peace in hand, and promise bliss to come.

SATIRE VI.

ON WOMEN.

Inscribed to the

RIGHT HON. THE LADY ELIZABETH GERMAIN.

Interdum tamen et tollit comœdia vocem.—*Hor.*

I SOUGHT a patroness, but sought in vain;
Apollo whispered in my ear—'Germain.'—
I know her not—'Your reason's somewhat odd;
Who knows his patron now?' replied the god.
'Men write to me, and to the world, unknown,
Then steal great names to shield them from the town.
Detected worth, like beauty disarrayed,
To covert flies, of praise itself afraid,
Should she refuse to patronize your lays,
In vengeance write a volume in her praise:
Nor think it hard so great a length to run;
When such the theme, 'twill easily be done.'
Ye fair! to draw your excellence at length,
Exceeds the narrow bounds of human strength:
You here, in miniature, your pictures see,
Nor hope from Zincke more justice than from me:
My portraits grace your mind, as his your side;
His portraits will inflame, mine quench your pride:
He's dear, you frugal; choose my cheaper lay,
And be your reformation all my pay.
Lavinia is polite, but not profane,
To church as constant as to Drury-lane;
She decently, in form, pays Heaven its due,
And makes a civil visit to her pew.
Her lifted fan, to give a solemn air,
Conceals her face, which passes for a prayer:
Curtsies to curtsies, then, with grace succeed;
Not one the fair omits, but at the creed:
Or if she join's the service, 'tis to speak;
Through dreadful silence the pent heart might break:
Untaught to bear it, women talk away
To God himself, and fondly think they pray:
But sweet their accent, and their air refined;
For they're before their Maker—and mankind.
When ladies once are proud of praying well,
Satan himself will toll the parish bell.
Acquainted with the world, and quite well-bred,
Drusa receives her visitants in bed;
But, chaste as ice, this Vesta, to defy
The very blackest tongue of calumny,
When from the sheets her lovely form she lifts,
She begs you just would turn you while she shifts.
Those charms are greatest which decline the sight,
That makes the banquet poignant and polite,
There is no woman where there's no reserve;
And 'tis on plenty your poor lovers starve.
But with a modern fair, meridian merit
Is a fierce thing they call a nymph of spirit.
Mark well the rollings of her flaming eye,
And tread on tiptoe, if you dare draw nigh:
'Or if you take a lion by the beard,
Or dare defy the fell Hyrcanian pard,
Or armed rhinoceros, or rough Russian bear,'*
First make your will, and then converse with her.
This lady glories in profuse expense,
And thinks distraction is magnificence:
To beggar her gallant is some delight;
To be more fatal still is exquisite.
Had ever nymph such reason to be glad?
In duel fell two lovers; one run mad.
Her foes their honest execrations pour;
Her lovers only should detest her more.
Flavia is constant to her old gallant,
And generously supports him in his want:
But marriage is a fetter, is a snare,
A hell no lady so polite can bear.
She's faithful, she's observant; and with pains
Her angel-brood of bastards she maintains;
Nor least advantage has the fair to plead,
But that of guilt, above the marriage-bed.
Amasia hates a prude, and scorns restraint;
Whate'er she is, she'll not appear a saint:
Her soul superior flies formality:
So gay her air, her conduct is so free,
Some might suspect the nymph not over-good—
Nor would they be mistaken if they should.
Unmarried Abra puts on formal airs;
Her cushion's thread-bare with her constant prayers;
Her only grief is, that she can not be
At once engaged in prayer and charity.
And this, to do her justice, must be said,
'Who would not think that Abra was a maid?'
Some ladies are too beauteous to be wed,
For where's the man that's worthy of their bed?
If no disease reduce her pride before,
Lavinia will be ravished at threescore:
Then she submits to venture in the dark,
And nothing now is wanting, but her spark.
Lucia thinks happiness consists in state;
She weds an idiot; but she eats in plate.
The goods of Fortune which her soul possess,
Are but the ground of unmade happiness:
The rude material: wisdom adds to this,
Wisdom, the sole artificer of bliss;
She from herself, if so compelled by need,
Of thin content can draw the subtle thread;

* Shakspeare's Hamlet.

But (no detraction to her sacred skill)
If she can work in gold 'tis better still.
If Tullia had been blessed with half her sense,
None could too much admire her excellence;
But since she can make error shine so bright,
She thinks it vulgar to defend the right.
With understanding she is quite o'er-run
And by too great accomplishments undone:
With skill she vibrates her eternal tongue,
For ever most divinely in the wrong.
Naked in nothing should a woman be,
But veil her very wit with modesty:
Let man discover, let not her display,
But yield her charms of mind with sweet delay.
For pleasure formed, perversely some believe,
To make themselves important, men must grieve.
Lesbia the fair, to fire her jealous lord,
Pretends the fop she laughs at is adored.
In vain she's proud of secret innocence:
The fact she feigns were scarce a worse offence.
Mira, endowed with every charm to bless,
Has no design but on her husband's peace:
He loved her much, and greatly was he moved
At small inquietudes in her he loved.
'How charming this!'—The pleasure lasted long;
Now every day the fits come thick and strong:
At last he found the charmer only feigned,
And was diverted when he should be pained.
What greater vengeance have the gods in store?
How tedious life, now she can plague no more?
She tries a thousand arts, but none succeed;
She's forced a fever to procure indeed:
Thus strictly proved this virtuous, loving wife
Her husband's pain was dearer than her life.
Anxious Melania rises to my view,
Who never thinks her lover pays his due:
Visit, present, treat, flatter, and adore,
Her majesty, to-morrow, calls for more.
His wounded ears complaints eternal fill,
As unoiled hinges, querulously shrill.
'You went last night with Celia to the ball.'
You prove it false. 'Not go? that's worst of all.'
Nothing can please her, nothing not inflame,
And arrant contradictions are the same.
Her lover must be sad to please her spleen;
His mirth is an inexpiable sin;
For of all rivals that can pain her breast,
There's one that wounds far deeper than the rest;
To wreck her quiet, the most dreadful shelf
Is, if her lover dares enjoy himself.
And this, because she's exquisitely fair:
Should I dispute her beauty: how she'd stare?
How would Melania be surprised to hear
She's quite deformed? and yet the case is clear.
What's female beauty but an air divine,
Through which the mind's all gentle graces shine?
They, like the sun, irradiate all between;
The body charms, because the soul is seen:
Hence men are often captives of a face,
They know not why, of no peculiar grace.
Some forms, though bright, no mortal man can bear,
Some none resist, though not exceeding fair.
Aspasia's highly born, and nicely bred,
Of taste refined, in life and manners read;
Yet reaps no fruit from her superior sense,
But to be teased by her own excellence.
'Folks are so awkward! things so unpolite!'
She's elegantly pained from morn till night.
Her delicacy's shocked where'er she goes:
Each creature's imperfections are her woes.
Heaven by its favour has the fair distressed,
And poured such blessings—that she can't be blessed.
Ah! why so vain, though blooming in thy spring,
Thou shining, frail, adored, and wretched thing?
Old age will come; disease may come before!
Fifteen is full as mortal as threescore.
Thy fortune and thy charms may soon decay;
But grant these fugitives prolong their stay,
Their basis totters, their foundation shakes,
Life, that supports them, in a moment breaks;
Then wrought into the soul let virtue shine;
The ground eternal, as the work divine.
Julia's a manager, she's born for rule,
And knows her wiser husband is a fool;
Assemblies holds, and spins the subtle thread,
That guides the lover to his fair-one's bed;
For difficult amours can smooth the way,
And tender letters dictate or convey;
But if deprived of such important cares,
Her wisdom condescends to less affairs.
For her own breakfast she'll project a scheme,
Nor take her tea without a stratagem;
Presides o'er trifles with a serious face,
Important by the virtue of grimace.
Ladies supreme among amusements reign,
By nature born to sooth and entertain:
Their prudence in a share of folly lies:
Why will they be so weak as to be wise?
Syrena is for ever in extremes,
And with a vengeance she commends or blames;
Conscious of her discernment, which is good,
She strains too much to make it understood.
Her judgment just, her sentence is too strong:
Because she's right, she's ever in the wrong.
Brunetta's wise in actions great and rare,
But scorns on trifles to bestow her care;
Thus every hour Brunetta is to blame,
Because the occasion is beneath her aim.
Think nought a trifle, though it small appear;
Small sands the mountain, moments make the year,
And trifles life: your care to trifles give,
Or you may die before you truly live.
Go breakfast with Alicea, there you'll see
Simplex munditiis to the last degree:

Unlaced her stays, her nightgown is untied,
And what she has of head-dress is aside:
She drawls her words and waddles in her pace,
Unwashed her hands, and much besnuffed her face:
A nail uncut, and head uncombed, she loves,
And would draw jack-boots on as soon as gloves;
Gloves by queen Bess's maidens might be missed,
Her blessed eyes ne'er saw a female fist.
Lovers! beware, to wound how can she fail,
With scarlet finger and long jetty nail?
For Hervey* the first wit she can not be,
Nor, cruel Richmond!† the first toast for thee.
Since full each other station of renown,
Who would not be the greatest trapes in town?
Women were made to give our eyes delight:
A female-sloven is an odious sight.
Fair Isabella is so fond of fame,
That her dear self is her eternal theme:
Through hopes of contradiction oft she'll say,
'Methinks I look so wretchedly to-day?'
When most the world applauds you, most beware;
'Tis often less a blessing than a snare.
Distrust mankind; with your own heart confer,
And dread even there to find a flatterer.
The breath of others raises our renown;
Our own as surely blows the pageant down.
Take up no more than you by worth can claim,
Lest soon you prove a bankrupt in your fame.
But own I must, in this perverted age,
Who most deserve can't always most engage.
So far is worth from making glory sure,
It often hinders what it should procure.
Whom praise we most? the virtuous, brave, and wise?
No; wretches whom, in secret, we despise.
And who so blind as not to see the cause?
No rivals raised by such discreet applause;
And yet of credit it lays in a store,
By which our spleen may wound true worth the more.
Ladies there are who think one crime is all:
Can women, then, no way but backward fall?
So sweet is that one crime they don't pursue,
To pay its loss they think all others few.
Who hold that crime so dear, must never claim
Of injured modesty the sacred name.
But Clio thus, 'What! railing without end?
Mean task! how much more generous to commend!
Yes, to commend as you are wont to do,
My kind instructor, and example too.
'Daphnis,' says Clio, 'has a charming eye;
What pity 'tis her shoulder is awry!
Aspasia's shape, indeed—but then her air—
The man has parts who finds destruction there.
Almeria's wit has something that's divine;
And wit's enough—how few in all things shine!

Selina serves her friends, relieves the poor—
Who was it said Selina's near threescore?
At Lucia's match I from my soul rejoice,
The world congratulates so wise a choice:
His lordship's rent-roll is exceeding great—
But mortgages will sap the best estate.
In Shirley's* form might cherubims appear,
But then—she has a freckle on her ear.'
Without a *but*, Hortensia she commends,
The first of women, and the best of friends;
Owns her in person, wit, fame, virtue, bright;
But how comes this to pass?—she died last night

Thus nymphs commend, who yet at satire rail:
Indeed that's needless, if such praise prevail.
And whence such praise? our virulence is thrown
On others' fame, through fondness for our own.

Of rank and riches proud, Cleora frowns,
For are not coronets akin to crowns?
Her greedy eye, and her sublime address,
The height of avarice and pride confess.
You seek perfections worthy of her rank;
Go, seek for her perfections at the Bank.
By wealth unquenched, by reason uncontrolled,
For ever burns her sacred thirst for gold:
As fond of five pence as the veriest cit,
And quite as much detested as a wit.

Can gold calm passion, or make reason shine?
Can we dig peace or wisdom from the mine?
Wisdom to gold prefer, for 'tis much less
To make our fortune than our happiness:
That happiness which great ones often see,
With rage and wonder, in a low degree,
Themselves unblessed. The poor are only poor;
But what are they who droop amid their store?
Nothing is meaner than a wretch of state.
The happy only are the truly great.
Peasants enjoy like appetites with kings,
And those best satisfied with cheapest things.
Could both our Indies buy but one new sense,
Our envy would be due to large expense:
Since not, those pomps which to the great belong
Are but poor arts to mark them from the throng.
See how they beg an alms of Flattery:
They languish! oh, support them with a lie!
A decent competence we fully taste;
It strikes our sense, and gives a constant feast:
More we perceive by dint of thought alone:
The rich must labour to possess their own,
To feel their great abundance, and request
Their humble friends to help them to be blest;
To see their treasures, hear their glory told,
And aid the wretched impotence of gold.

But some, great souls! and touched with warmth divine,
Give gold a price, and teach its beams to shine.

* Lord Hervey. † Duke of Richmond.

* Probably Lady Frances Shirley.

All hoarded treasures they repute a load,
Nor think their wealth their own, till well bestowed:
Grand reservoirs of public happiness,
Through secret streams diffusively they bless,
And while their bounties glide, concealed from view,
Relieve our wants, and spare our blushes too.
But satire is my task, and these destroy
Her gloomy province and malignant joy.
Help me, ye misers! help me to complain,
And blast our common enemy, Germain:*
But our invectives must despair success,
For next to praise she values nothing less.
What picture's yonder, loosened from its frame?
Or is't Asturia? that affected dame.
The brightest forms, through affectation, fade
To strange new things, which Nature never made.
Frown not, ye fair! so much your sex we prize,
We hate those arts that take you from our eyes.
In Albucinda's native grace is seen
What you, who labour at perfection, mean.
Short is the rule, and to be learned with ease,
Retain your gentle selves, and you must please.
Here might I sing of Memmia's mincing mien,
And all the movements of the soft machine;
How two red lips affected zephyrs blow,
To cool the bohea, and inflame the beau;
While one white finger and a thumb conspire
To lift the cup, and make the world admire.
Tea! how I tremble at thy fatal stream!
As Lethe dreadful to the Love of Fame..
What devastations on thy banks are seen!
What shades of mighty names which once have been!
An hecatomb of characters supplies
Thy painted altars' daily sacrifice.
Hervey, Pearce, Blount, aspersed by thee, decay,
As grains of finest sugar melt away,
And recommend thee more to mortal taste:
Scandal's the sweet'ner of a female feast.
But this inhuman triumph shall decline,
And thy revolting naiads call for wine;
Spirits no longer shall serve under thee,
But reign in thy own cup, exploded tea!
Citronia's nose declares thy ruin nigh,
And who dares give Citronia's nose the lie?†
The ladies long at men of drink exclaimed,
And what impaired both health and virtue blamed:
At length to rescue man, the generous lass
Stole from her consort the pernicious glass:
As glorious as the British queen renowned,
Who sucked the poison from her husband's wound.
Nor to the glass alone are nymphs inclined,
But every bolder vice of bold mankind.

O Juvenal! for thy severer rage!
To lash the ranker follies of our age.
Are there, among the females of our isle,
Such faults at which it is a fault to smile?
There are: Vice once by modest Nature chained,
And legal ties, expatiates unrestrained;
Without thin decency held up to view,
Naked she stalks o'er law and gospel too.
Our matrons lead such exemplary lives,
Men sigh in vain for none, but for their wives;
Who marry to be free, to range the more,
And wed one man, to wanton with a score.
Abroad too kind, at home 'tis steadfast hate,
And one eternal tempest of debate.
What foul eruptions from a look most meek!
What thunders bursting from a dimpled cheek!
Their passions bear it with a lofty hand!
But then their reason is at due command.
Is there whom you detest, and seek his life?
Trust no soul with the secret—but his wife.
Wives wonder that their conduct I condemn,
And ask what kindred is a spouse to them?
What swarms of amorous grandmothers I see
And misses, ancient in iniquity!
What blasting whispers, and what loud declaiming!
What lying, drinking, bawding, swearing, gaming!
Friendship so cold, such warm incontinence,
Such griping avarice, such profuse expense,
Such dead devotion, such a zeal for crimes,
Such licensed ill, such masquerading times,
Such venal faiths, such misapplied applause,
Such flattered guilt, and such inverted laws,
Such dissolution through the whole I find;
'Tis not a world, but chaos of mankind.
Since Sundays have no balls, the well-dressed belle
Shines in the pew, but smiles to hear of hell,
And casts an eye of sweet disdain on all
Who listens less to Collins than St. Paul.
Atheists have been but rare: since Nature's birth,
Till now, she-atheists ne'er appeared on earth.
Ye men of deep researches! say, whence springs
This daring character in timorous things?
Who start at feathers, from an insect fly,
A match for nothing—but the Deity.
But, not to wrong the fair, the Muse must own,
In this pursuit they court not fame alone,
But join to that a more substantial view,
'From thinking free, to be free agents too.'
They strive with their own hearts, and keep them down,
In complaisance to all the fools in town.
O, how they tremble at the name of prude!
And die with shame at thought of being good!
For what will Artimis, the rich and gay,
What will the wits, that is, the coxcombs, say?

* Lady Betty Germain, a correspondent of Swift.

——Solem quis dicere falsum
audeat *Virgil.*

They Heaven defy, to earth's vile dregs a slave,
Through cowardice most execrably brave.
With our own judgments durst we to comply,
In virtue should we live, in glory die.
Rise then, my Muse! in honest fury rise;
They dread a satire who defy the skies.
Atheists are few: most nymphs a Godhead own,
And nothing but his attributes dethrone.
From atheist, far, they stedfastly believe
God is, and is almighty—to forgive.
His other excellence they'll not dispute:
But mercy, sure, is his chief attribute.
Shall pleasures of a short duration chain
A lady's soul in everlasting pain?
Will the great Author us poor worms destroy,
For now and then a sip of transient joy?
No, he's for ever in a smiling mood;
He's like themselves, or how could he be good?
And they blaspheme who blacker schemes suppose—
Devoutly, thus, Jehovah they depose,
The pure! the just! and set up in his stead,
A deity that's perfectly well-bred.
'Dear Tillotson! be sure the best of men;
Nor thought he more than thought great Origen.
Though once upon a time he misbehaved
Poor Satan! doubtless he'll at length be saved.
Let priests do something for their one in ten;
It is their trade: so far they're honest men.
Let them cant on, since they have got the knack,
And dress their notions, like themselves, in black;
Fright us with terrors of a world unknown,
From joys of this, to keep them all their own.
Of earth's fair fruits, indeed, they claim a fee;
But then they leave our untythed virtue free.
Virtue's a pretty thing to make a show;
Did ever mortal write like Rochefoucault?'
Thus pleads the devil's fair apologist,
And, pleading, safely enters on his list.
Let angel-forms angelic truths maintain,
Nature disjoins the beauteous and profane.
For what's true beauty but fair Virtue's face?
Virtue made visible in outward grace?
She, then, that's haunted with an impious mind?
The more she charms, the more she shocks mankind.
But charms decline: the fair long vigils keep:
They sleep no more: Quadrille* has murdered Sleep.
'Poor Kemp!'† cries Livia; 'I have not been there
These two nights: the poor creature will despair.
I hate a crowd—but to do good, you know—
And people of condition should bestow.'
Convinced, o'ercome, to Kemp's grave matrons run,
Now set a daughter, and now stake a son;
Let health, fame, temper, beauty, fortune, fly,
And beggar half their race—through charity.
Immortal were we, or else mortal quite,
I less should blame this criminal delight;
But since the gay assembly's gayest room
Is but an upper story to the tomb,
Methinks we need not our short beings shun,
And, thought to fly, contend to be undone:
We need not buy our ruin with our crime,
And give eternity to murder time.
The love of gaming is the worst of ills;
With ceaseless storms the blackened soul it fills;
Inveighs at Heaven, neglects the ties of blood,
Destroys the will and power of doing good;
Kills health, pawns honour, plunges in disgrace,
And, what is still more dreadful—spoils your face.
See yonder set of thieves that live on spoil,
The scandal and the ruin of our isle!
And see, (strange sight!) amid that ruffian band,
A form divine high wave her snowy hand,
That rattles loud a small enchanted box,
Which, loud as thunder, on the board she knocks:
And as fierce storms, which earth's foundation shook,
From Æolus's cave impetuous broke:
From this small cavern a mixed tempest flies,
Fear, rage, convulsions, tears, oaths, blasphemies!
For men, I mean,—the fair discharges none:
She (guiltless creature!) swears to Heaven alone.
See her eyes start! cheeks glow! and muscles swell!
Like the mad maid in the Cumean cell.
Thus that divine-one her soft nights employs!
Thus tunes her soul to tender nuptial joys!
And when the cruel morning calls to bed,
And on her pillow lays her aching head,
With the dear images her dreams are crowned,
The die spins lovely, or the cards go round;
Imaginary ruins charm her still;
Her happy lord 's cuckolded by Spadille;
And if she's brought to bed, 'tis ten to one
He marks the forehead of her darling son.
O scene of horror and of wild despair!
Why is the rich Atrides' splendid heir
Constrained to quit his ancient lordly seat,
And hide his glories in a mean retreat?
Why that drawn sword? and whence that dismal cry?
Why pale distraction through the family?
See my lord threaten, and my lady weep,
And trembling servants from the tempest creep.
Why that gay son to distant regions sent?
What fiends that daughter's destined match prevent?
Why the whole house in sudden ruin laid?
O nothing, but last night—my lady played.
But wanders not my Satire from her theme?
Is this, too, owing to the Love of Fame?

* Shakspeare. † Keeper of an assembly.

Though, now, your hearts on lucre are bestowed,
'Twas first a vain devotion to the mode:
Nor cease we here, since 'tis a vice so strong,
The torrent sweeps all womankind along.
This may be said in honour of our times,
That none now stand distinguished by their crimes.
If sin you must, take Nature for your guide;
Love has some soft excuse to soothe your pride.
Ye fair apostates from Love's ancient power!
Can nothing ravish but a golden shower?
Can cards alone your glowing fancy seize?
Must Cupid learn to punt, ere he can please?
When you're enamoured of a lift or cast,
What can the preacher more to make us chaste?
Why must strong youths unmarried pine away?
They find no woman disengaged—from play.
Why pine the married?—O severer fate!
They find from play no disengaged—estate.
Flavia, at lovers false, untouched and hard,
Turns pale, and trembles at a cruel card.
Nor Arria's Bible can secure her age;
Her threescore years are shuffling with her page,
While Death stands by but till the game is done,
To sweep that stake, in justice long his own:
Like old cards, tinged with sulphur, she takes fire;
Or, like snuffs sunk in sockets, blazes higher.
Ye gods! with new delights inspire the fair,
Or give us sons, and save us from despair.
Sons, brothers, fathers, husbands, tradesmen, close
In my complaint, and brand your sins in prose:
Yet I believe, as firmly as my creed,
In spite of all our wisdom, you'll proceed.
Our pride so great, our passion is so strong,
Advice to right confirms us in the wrong.
I hear you cry, 'This fellow's very odd,'
When you chastise, who would not kiss the rod?
But I've a charm your anger shall control,
And turn your eyes with coldness on the vole.
The charm begins! To yonder flood of light,
That bursts o'er gloomy Britain, turn your sight.
What guardian power o'erwhelms your souls with awe?
Her deeds are precepts, her example law;
Midst empire's charms how Carolina's* heart
Glows with the love of virtue and of art!
Her favour is diffused to that degree,
Excess of goodness! it has dawned on me.
When in my page, to balance numerous faults,
Or godlike deeds were shown, or generous thoughts,
She smiled, industrious to be pleased, nor knew
From whom my pen the borrowed lustre drew.
Thus the majestic mother of mankind,†
To her own charms most amiably blind,
On the green margin innocently stood,
And gazed indulgent on the crystal flood;
Surveyed the stranger in the painted wave,
And, smiling, praised the beauties which she gave.

* Queen Caroline † Milton.

SATIRE VII.

TO THE RIGHT HON. SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

Carmina tum melius, cum venerit Ipse, canemus.—*Virg*

On this last labour, this my closing strain,
Smile, Walpole! or the Nine inspire in vain.
To thee 'tis due; that verse how justly thine,
Where Brunswick's glory crowns the whole design?
That glory which thy counsels make so bright;
That glory which on thee reflects a light.
Illustrious commerce, and but rarely known!
To give, and take, a lustre from the throne.
Nor think that thou art foreign to my theme;
The fountain is not foreign to the stream.
How all mankind will be surprised to see
This flood of British folly charged on thee!
Say, Britain! whence this caprice of thy sons,
Which through their various ranks with fury runs?
The cause is plain, a cause which we must bless,
For Caprice is the daughter of Success,
(A bad effect, but from a pleasing cause!)
And gives our rulers undesigned applause,
Tells how their conduct bids our wealth increase
And lulls us in the downy lap of Peace.
While I survey the blessings of our isle,
Her arts triumphant in the royal smile,
Her public wounds bound up, her credit high,
Her commerce spreading sails in every sky,
The pleasing scene recalls my theme again,
And shows the madness of ambitious men,
Who, fond of bloodshed, draw the murdering sword,
And burn to give mankind a single lord.
The follies past are of a private kind;
Their sphere is small, their mischief is confined;
But daring men there are (awake, my Muse!
And raise thy verse) who bolder frenzy choose;
Who, stung by glory, rave, and bound away,
The world their field, and humankind their prey.
The Grecian chief, th' enthusiast of his pride,
With Rage and Terror stalking by his side,
Raves round the globe; he soars into a god!
Stand fast, Olympus! and sustain his nod.
The pest divine in horrid grandeur reigns,
And thrives on mankind's miseries and pains.
What slaughtered hosts! what cities in a blaze!
What wasted countries! and what crimson seas!
With orphans' tears his impious bowl o'erflows,
And cries of kingdoms lull him to repose.
And can not thrice ten hundred years unpraise
The boisterous boy, and blast his guilty bays?
Why want we, then, encomiums on the storm,
Or famine or volcano? they perform
Their mighty deeds; they, hero-like, can slay,
And spread their ample deserts in a day.
O great alliance! O divine renown!
With dearth and pestilence to share the crown.

When men extol a wild destroyer's name,
Earth's Builder and Preserver they blaspheme.
One to destroy is murder by the law,
And gibbets keep the lifted hand in awe;
To murder thousands takes a specious name,
War's glorious art, and gives immortal fame.
When after battle I the field have seen
Spread o'er with ghastly shapes which once were men,
A nation crushed, a nation of the brave!
A realm of death! and on this side the grave!
'Are there,' said I, 'who from this sad survey,
This human chaos, carry smiles away?'
How did my heart with indignation rise!
How honest Nature swelled into my eyes!
How was I shocked to think the hero's trade
Of such materials, fame and triumph, made!
How guilty these? yet not less guilty they
Who reach false glory by a smoother way;
Who wrap destruction up in gentle words,
And bows and smiles, more fatal than their swords;
Who stifle nature, and subsist on art;
Who coin the face, and petrify the heart;
All real kindness for the show discard,
As marble polished, and as marble hard;
Who do for gold what Christians do through grace,
'With open arms their enemies embrace;'
Who give a nod when broken hearts repine,
'The thinnest food on which a wretch can dine:'
Or if they serve you, serve you disinclined,
And in their height of kindness are unkind.
Such courtiers were, and such again may be,
Walpole! when men forget to copy thee.
Here cease, my Muse! the catalogue is writ,
Nor one more candidate for fame admit;
Though disappointed thousands justly blame
Thy partial pen, and boast an equal claim:
Be this their comfort, fools, omitted here,
May furnish laughter for another year.
Then let Crispino, who was ne'er refused
The justice yet of being well abused,
With patience wait, and be content to reign
The pink of puppies in some future strain:
Some future strain, in which the Muse shall tell
How science dwindles, and how volumes swell.
How commentators each dark passage shun,
And hold their farthing candle to the sun.
How tortured texts to speak our sense are made,
And every vice is to the Scripture laid.
How misers squeeze a young voluptuous peer,
His sins to Lucifer not half so dear.
How Verres is less qualified to steal
With sword and pistol, than with wax and seal.
How lawyers' fees to such excess are run,
That clients are redressed till they're undone.
How one man's anguish is another's sport,
And e'en denials cost us dear at court.
How man eternally false judgments makes,
And all his joys and sorrows are mistakes.

This swarm of themes that settles on my pen,
Which I, like summer-flies, shake off again,
Let others sing: to whom my weak essay
But sounds a prelude, and points out their prey:
That duty done, I hasten to complete
My own design; for Tonson's at the gate.
The Love of Fame in its effects surveyed,
The Muse has sung; be now the cause displayed:
Since so diffusive, and so wide its sway,
What is this power whom all mankind obey?
Shot from above, by Heaven's indulgence, came
This generous ardour, this unconquered flame,
To warm, to raise, to deify mankind,
Still burning brightest in the noblest mind.
By large-souled men, for thirst of fame renowned,
Wise laws were framed, and sacred arts were found;
Desire of praise first broke the patriot's rest,
And made a bulwark of the warrior's breast;
It bids Argyle in fields and senates shine:
What more can prove its origin divine?
But, oh! this passion planted in the soul,
On eagle's wings to mount her to the pole,
The flaming minister of virtue meant,
Set up false gods, and wronged her high descent.
Ambition, hence, exerts a double force,
Of blots and beauties an alternate source;
Hence Gildon rails, that raven of the pit,
Who thrives upon the carcasses of Wit;
And in art-loving Scarborough is seen
How kind a patron Pollio might have been.
Pursuit of fame with pedants fills our schools,
And into coxcombs burnishes our fools;
Pursuit of fame makes solid learning bright,
And Newton lifts above a mortal height:
That key of Nature, by whose wit she clears
Her long, long secrets of five thousand years.
Would you then, fully, comprehend the whole,
Why, and in what degrees, Pride sways the soul?
(For though in all, not equally, she reigns)
Awake to knowledge, and attend my strains.
Ye doctors! hear the doctrine I disclose,
As true as if 'twere writ in dullest prose;
As if a lettered dunce had said, ''Tis right;'
And *imprimatur* ushered it to light.
Ambition, in the truly noble mind,
With sister Virtue is for ever joined;
As in famed Lucrece, who, with equal dread,
From guilt and shame by her last conduct fled:
Her virtue long rebelled in firm disdain,
And the sword pointed at her heart in vain;
But when the slave was threatened to be laid
Dead by her side, her Love of Fame obeyed.
In meaner minds Ambition works alone,
But with such art puts Virtue's aspect on,
That not more like in feature and in mien,
The god* and mortal in the comic scene.

* Amphitryon

False Julius, ambushed in this fair disguise,
Soon made the Roman liberties his prize.
No mask in basest minds Ambition wears,
But in full light pricks up her ass's ears:
All I have sung are instances of this,
And prove my theme unfolded not amiss.
Ye vain! desist from your erroneous strife;
Be wise, and quit the false sublime of life.
The true ambition there alone resides,
Where justice vindicates, and wisdom guides;
Where inward dignity joins outward state,
Our purpose good, as our achievement great;
Where public blessings public praise attend;
Where glory is our motive, not our end.
Would'st thou be famed? have those high deeds in view:
Brave men would act, though scandal should ensue.
Behold a prince! whom no swoln thoughts inflame,
No pride of thrones, no fever after fame;
But when the welfare of mankind inspires,
And death in view to dear-bought glory fires,
Proud conquests then, then regal pomps delight;
Then crowns, then triumphs, sparkle in his sight;
Tumult and noise are dear, which with them bring
His people's blessing to their ardent king;
But when those great heroic motives cease,
His swelling soul subsides to native peace;
From tedious Grandeur's faded charms withdraws,
A sudden foe to splendour and applause;
Greatly deferring his arrears of fame,
Till men and angels jointly shout his name,
O pride celestial! which can pride disdain;
O blessed ambition! which can ne'er be vain.
From one famed Alpine hill, which props the sky,
In whose deep womb unfathomed waters lie,
Here burst the Rhone and sounding Po; there shine,
In infant rills, the Danube and the Rhine;
From the rich store one fruitful urn supplies,
Whole kingdoms smile, a thousand harvests rise.
In Brunswick such a source the Muse adores,
Which public blessings through half Europe pours
When his heart burns with such a godlike aim,
Angels and George are rivals for the fame:
George! who in foes can soft affections raise,
And charm envenomed satire into praise.
Nor human rage alone his power perceives,
But the mad winds, and the tumultuous waves.*
E'en storms (Death's fiercest ministers!) forbear,
And in their own wild empire learn to spare.
Thus Nature's self, supporting man's decree,
Styles Britain's sovereign, Sovereign of the sea!
While sea and air, great Brunswick! shook our state,
And sported with a king's and kingdom's fate,
Deprived of what she loved, and pressed with fear
Of ever losing what she held most dear,
How did Britannia, like Achilles,† weep,
And tell her sorrows to the kindred deep?
Hang o'er the floods, and, in devotion warm,
Strive for thee with the surge, and fight the storm?
What felt thy Walpole, pilot of the realm?
Our Palinurus‡ slept not at the helm;
His eye ne'er closed, long since enured to wake,
And outwatch every star, for Brunswick's sake:
By thwarting passions tossed, by cares oppressed
He found the tempest pictured in his breast:
But now what joys that gloom of heart dispel,
No powers of language—but his own, can tell;
His own, which Nature and the Graces form,
At will to raise or hush the civil storm.

Epistles.

EPISTLES TO MR. POPE,
CONCERNING THE AUTHORS OF THE AGE.

EPISTLE I.

Whilst you at Twick'nham plan the future wood,
Or turn the volumes of the wise and good,
Our senate meets; at parties parties bawl,
And pamphlets stun the streets and load the stall:
So rushing tides bring things obscene to light,
Foul wrecks emerge, and dead dogs swim in sight;
The civil torrent foams, the tumult reigns,
And Codrus' prose works up, and Lico's strains,
Lo! what from cellars rise, what rush from high,
Where Speculation roosted near the sky;
Letters, essays, sock, buskin, satire, song,
And all the garret thunders on the throng!
O Pope! I burst; nor can, nor will refrain;
I'll write, let others in their turn complain.
Truce, truce, ye Vandals! my tormented ear
Less dreads a pillory than pamphleteer:
I've heard myself to death; and, plagued each hour,
Sha'n't I return the vengeance in my power?
For who can write the true absurd like me?—
Thy pardon, Codrus! who, I mean, but thee?
Pope! if like mine or Codrus' were thy style,
The blood of vipers had not stained thy file;
Merit less solid, less despite had bred;
They had not bit, and then they had not bled.
Fame is a public mistress, none enjoys,
But, more or less, his rival's peace destroys;

* The King in danger by sea. † Hom. Il. lib. i.
‡ Exce Deus ramum Lethæo rore madentem, &c.
Virg. lib. v.

With fame, in just proportion, envy grows;
The man that makes a character, makes foes:
Slight peevish insects round a genius rise,
As a bright day awakes the world of flies;
With hearty malice, but with feeble wing,
(To show they live) they flutter, and they sting;
But, as by depredations wasps proclaim
The fairest fruit, so these the fairest fame.
Shall we not censure all the motley train,
Whether with ale irriguous or champaign;
Whether they tread the vale of prose, or climb,
And whet their appetites on cliffs of rhyme;
The college sloven, or embroidered spark!
The purple prelate, or the parish-clerk;
The quiet quidnunc, or demanding prig!
The plaintiff Tory, or defendant Whig;
Rich, poor, male, female, young, old, gay, or sad;
Whether extremely witty, or quite mad:
Profoundly dull, or shallowly polite;
Men that read well, or men that only write?
Whether peers, porters, tailors, tune the reeds,
And measuring words, to measuring shapes succeeds;
For bankrupts write when ruined shops are shut,
As maggots crawl from out a perished nut:
His hammer this, and that his trowel quits,
And wanting sense for tradesmen, serve for wits.
By thriving men subsists each other trade;
Of every broken craft a writer's made:
Thus his material, paper, takes its birth
From tattered rags of all the stuff on earth.
Hail, fruitful Isle! to thee alone belong
Millions of wits, and brokers in old song;
Thee well-a Land of Liberty we name,
Where all are free to scandal and to shame;
Thy sons, by print, may set their hearts at ease,
And be mankind's contempt whene'er they please;
Like trodden filth, their vile and abject sense
Is unperceived, but when it gives offence:
Their heavy prose our injured reason tires;
Their verse immoral kindles loose desires:
Our age they puzzle, and corrupt our prime,
Our sport and pity, punishment and crime.
What glorious motives urge our authors on
Thus to undo, and thus to be undone?
One loses his estate, and down he sits,
To show (in vain) he still retains his wits:
Another marries, and his dear proves keen:
He writes, as an hyphnotic for the spleen:
Some write, confined by physic; some, by debt;
Some, for 'tis Sunday; some, because 'tis wet:
Through private pique some do the public right,
And love their king and country out of spite:
Another writes because his father writ,
And proves himself a bastard by his wit.
Has Lyco learning, humour, thought profound?
Neither: why write then? he wants twenty pound:
His belly, not his brains, the impulse give;
He 'll grow immortal, for he can not live:
He rubs his awful front, and takes his ream,
With no provision made, but of this theme:
Perhaps a title has his fancy smit,
Or a quaint motto, which he thinks has wit:
He writes, in inspiration puts his trust,
Though wrong his thoughts, the gods will make them just:
Genius directly from the gods descends,
And who by labour would distrust his friends?
Thus having reasoned with consummate skill,
In immortality he dips his quill;
And, since blank paper is denied the press,
He mingles the whole alphabet by guess;
In various sets, which various words compose,
Of which he hopes mankind the meaning knows.
So sounds spontaneous from the Sybil broke,
Dark to herself the wonders which she spoke;
The priests found out the meaning if they could,
And nations stared at what none understood.
Clodio dressed, danced, drank, visited, (the whole
And great concern of an immortal soul!)
Oft have I said, "awake! exist! and strive
For birth! nor think to loiter is to live!"
As oft, I overheard the demon say,
Who daily met the loiterer in his way,
"I 'll meet thee, Youth! at White's." The youth replies,
"I 'll meet thee there," and falls his sacrifice;
His fortune squandered, leaves his virtue bare
To every bribe, and blind to every snare.
Clodio for bread his indolence must quit,
Or turn a soldier, or commence a wit.
Such heroes have we! all but life they stake;
How must Spain tremble, and the German shake!
Such writers have we! all but sense they print;
Even George's praise is dated from the Mint.
In arms contemptible, in arts profane,
Such swords, such pens, disgrace a monarch's reign.
Reform your lives before you thus aspire,
And steal (for you can steal) celestial fire.
O the just contrast! O the beauteous strife!
'Twixt their cool writings and Pindaric life:
They write with phlegm, but then they live with fire:
They cheat the lender, and their works the buyer.
I reverence misfortune, not deride;
I pity poverty, but laugh at pride:
For who so sad but must some mirth confess
At gay Castruchio's miscellaneous dress?
Though there's but one of the dull works he wrote
There's ten editions of his old laced coat.
These, Nature's commoners, who want a home
Claim the wide world for their majestic dome;
They make a private study of the street,
And, looking full on every man they meet,
Run souse against his chaps, who stands amazed
They find they did not see, but only gazed.
How must these bards be rapt into the skies?
You need not read, you feel their ecstacies.

Will they persist? 'tis madness. Lintot, run,
See them confined.—"O, that's already done."
Most, as by leases, by the works they print,
Have took, for life, possession of the Mint.
If you mistake, and pity these poor men,
Est Ulubris, they cry, and write again.
Such wits their nuisance manfully expose,
And then pronounce just judges learning's foes.
O frail conclusion! the reverse is true;
If foes to learning, they'd be friends to you:
Treat them, ye judges! with an honest scorn,
And weed the cockle from the generous corn:
There's true good nature in your disrespect;
In justice to the good, the bad neglect:
For immortality if hardships plead,
It is not theirs who write, but ours who read.
But, O! what wisdom can convince a fool
But that 'tis dulness to conceive him dull?
'Tis sad experience takes the censor's part,
Conviction not from reason, but from smart.
A virgin author, recent from the press,
The sheets yet wet, applauds his great success:
Surveys them, reads them, takes their charms to bed,
Those in his hand, and glory in his head;
'Tis joy too great; a fever of delight!
His heart beats thick, nor close his eyes all night;
But rising the next morn to clasp his fame,
He finds that without sleeping he could dream.
So sparks, they say, take goddesses to bed,
And find next day the devil in their stead.
In vain advertisements the town o'erspread;
They're epitaphs, and say the work is dead.
Who press for fame but small recruits will raise;
'Tis volunteers alone can give the bays.
A famous author visits a great man,
Of his immortal work displays the plan,
And says, "Sir, I'm your friend; all fears dismiss,
Your glory and my own shall live by this;
Your power is fixed, your fame through time conveyed,
And Britain Europe's queen—if I am paid."
A statesman has his answer in a trice;
"Sir, such a genius is beyond all price;
What man can pay for this?"—Away he turns,
His work is folded, and his bosom burns:
His patron he will patronize no more,
But rushes like a tempest out of door.
Lost is the patriot, and extinct his name!
Out comes the piece, another, and the same;
For A, his magic pen evokes an O,
And turns the tide of Europe on the foe:
He rams his quill with scandal and with scoff,
But 'tis so very foul it won't go off:
Dreadful his thunders, while unprinted, roar,
But when once published they are heard no more.
Thus distant bugbears fright, but nearer draw,
The block's a block, and turns to mirth your awe.
Can these oblige whose heads and hearts are such?
No; every party's tainted by their touch.
Infected persons fly each public place,
And none, or enemies alone, embrace;
To the foul fiend their every passion's sold;
They love and hate, extempore, for gold.
What image of their fury can we form?
Dulness and rage, a puddle in a storm.
Rest they in peace? If they are pleased to buy,
To swell your sails, like Lapland winds they fly.
Write they with rage? the tempest quickly flags;
A state Ulysses tames 'em with his bags;
Let him be what he will, Turk, Pagan, Jew,
For Christian ministers of state are few.
Behind the curtain lurks the fountain-head
That pours his politics through pipes of lead,
Which far and near ejaculate and spout,
O'er tea and coffee, poison to the rout;
But when they have bespattered all they may,
The statesman throws his filthy squirts away!
With golden forceps these another takes,
And state-elixirs of the vipers makes.
The richest statesman wants enough to pay
A servile sycophant, if well they weigh
How much it costs the wretch to be so base;
Nor can the greatest powers enough disgrace,
Enough chastise, such prostitute applause,
If well they weigh how much it stains their cause
But are our writers ever in the wrong?
Does virtue ne'er seduce the venal tongue?
Yes; if well-bribed, for virtue's self they fight,
Still in the wrong, though champions for the right:
Whoe'er their crimes for interest only quit,
Sin on in virtue, and good deeds commit.
Nought but inconstancy Britannia meets,
And broken faith in their abandoned sheets.
From the same hand how various is the page!
What civil war their brother pamphlets wage!
Tracts battle tracts, self-contradictions glare:
Say, is this lunacy?—I wish it were.
If such our writers, startled at the sight,
Felons may bless their stars they can not write!
How justly Proteus' transmigrations fit
The monstrous changes of a modern wit!
Now such a gentle stream of eloquence,
As seldom rises to the verge of sense;
Now, by mad rage, transformed into a flame,
Which yet fit engines, well applied can tame,
Now, on immodest trash, the swine obscene
Invites the town to sup at Drury-lane!
A dreadful lion, now he roars at power,
Which sends him to his brothers at the Tower;
He's now a serpent, and his double tongue
Salutes, nay, licks the feet of those he stung.
What note can bind him, his evasion such?
One knot he well deserves which might do much

The flood, flame, swine, the lion, and the snake,
Those fivefold monsters, modern authors make.
The snake reigns most; snakes, Pliny says, are bred
When the brain's perished in a human head.
Yegrovelling,trodden, whipt, stript, turncoat things,
Made up of venom, volumes, stains, and stings!
Thrown from the tree of knowledge, like you, curs'd
To scribble in the dust, was snake the first.
What if the figure should in fact prove true?
It did in Elkenah, why not in you?
Poor Elkenah, all other changes past,
For bread in Smithfield dragons hissed at last,
Spit streams of fire to make the butchers gape,
And found his manners suited to his shape.
Such is the fate of talents misapplied;
So lived your prototype, and so he died.
The abandoned manners of our writing train
May tempt mankind to think religion vain;
But in their fate, their habit, and their mien,
That gods there are is eminently seen:
Heaven stands absolved by vengeance on their pen,
And marks the murderers of fame from men:
Through meagre jaws they draw their venal breath,
As ghastly as their brothers in Macbeth:
Their feet through faithless leather meet the dirt,
And oftener changed their principles than shirt:
The transient vestments of these frugal men
Hasten to paper for our mirth again:
Too soon (O merry melancholy fate!)
They beg in rhyme, and warble through a grate:
The man lampooned forgets it at the sight;
The friend through pity gives, the foe through spite;
And though full conscious of his injured purse,
Lintot relents, nor Curll can wish them worse.
So fare the men who writers dare commence
Without their patent, probity, and sense.
From these their politics our quidnuncs seek,
And Saturday's the learning of the week:
These lab'ring wits, like paviors, mend our ways,
With heavy, huge, repeated, flat, essays;
Ram their coarse nonsense down, though ne'er so dull,
And hem at every thump upon your scull;
These staunch-bred writing hounds begin the cry,
And honest Folly echoes to the lie.
O how I laugh when I a blockhead see
Thanking a villain for his probity:
Who stretches out a most respectful ear,
With snares for woodcocks in his holy leer:
It tickles through my soul to hear the cock's
Sincere encomium on his friend the fox,
Sole patron of his liberties and rights!
While graceless Reynard listens—till he bites.
As when the trumpet sounds, the o'erloaded state
Discharges all her poor and profligate,
Crimes of all kinds dishonoured weapons wield,
And prisons pour their filth into the field;
Thus Nature's refuse, and the dregs of men,
Compose the black militia of the pen.

EPISTLE II.

FROM OXFORD.

All write at London; shall the rage abate
Here, where it most should shine, the Muses' seat?
Where, mortal, or immortal, as they please,
The learned may choose eternity or ease?
Has not a royal patron* wisely strove
To woo the Muse in her Athenian grove?
Added new strings to her harmonious shell,
And given new tongues to those who spoke so well?
Let these instruct, with truth's illustrious ray,
Awake the world, and scare our owls away.
Meanwhile, O Friend! indulge me, if I give
Some needful precepts how to write and live;
Serious should be an author's final views:
Who write for pure amusement, ne'er amuse.
An Author! 'tis a venerable name!
How few deserve it, and what numbers claim!
Unblessed with sense, above their peers refined,
Who shall stand up dictators to mankind?
Nay, who dare shine, if not in virtue's cause?
That sole proprietor of just applause.
Ye restless men! who pant for lettered praise.
With whom would you consult to gain the bays?
With those great authors whose famed works you read?
'Tis well; go, then, consult the laureled shade.
What answer will the laureled shade return?
Hear it and tremble! he commands you burn
The noblest works his envyed genius writ,
That boasts of nought more excellent than wit.
If this be true, as 'tis a truth most dread,
Wo to the page which has not that to plead!
Fontaine and Chaucer, dying, wished unwrote
The sprightliest efforts of their wanton thought;
Sidney and Waller, brightest sons of fame,
Condemned the charm of ages to the flame.
And in one point is all true wisdom cast?
To think that early, we must think at last.
Immortal wits, e'en dead, break nature's laws,
Injurious still to virtue's sacred cause;
And their guilt growing, as their bodies rot,
(Reversed ambition!) pant to be forgot.
Thus ends your courted fame: does lucre then
The sacred thirst of gold, betray your pen?
In prose 'tis blameable, in verse 'tis worse,
Provokes the Muse, extorts Apollo's curse:
His sacred influence never should be sold;
'Tis arrant simony to sing for gold:
'Tis immortality should fire your mind:
Scorn a less paymaster than all mankind.
If bribes you seek, know this, ye writing tribe
Who writes for virtue has the largest bribe:
All's on the party of the virtuous man;
The good will surely serve him if they can.

* His late Majesty's benefaction for modern languages.

The bad, when interest or ambition guide,
And 'tis at once their interest and their pride;
But should both fail to take him to their care,
He boasts a greater friend, and both may spare.
Letters to man uncommon light dispense,
And what is virtue but superior sense?
In parts and learning you who place your pride;
Your faults are crimes, your crimes are double-dyed.
What is a scandal of the first renown,
But lettered knaves, and atheists in a gown?
'Tis harder far to please than give offence;
The least misconduct damns the brightest sense:
Each shallow pate, that can not read your name,
Can read your life, and will be proud to blame.
Flagitious manners make impression deep
On those that o'er a page of Milton sleep:
Nor in their dulness think to save your shame;
True, these are fools; but wise men say the same.
Wits are a despicable race of men,
If they confine their talents to the pen;
When the man shocks us, while the writer shines,
Our scorn in life, our envy in his lines.
Yet, proud of parts, with prudence some dispense,
And play the fool, because they're men of sense.
What instances bleed recent in each thought,
Of men to ruin by their genius brought?
Against their wills what ruin shun,
Purely through want of wit to be undone?
Nature has shown, by making it so rare,
That wit's a jewel which we need not wear:
Of plain sound sense life's current coin is made;
With that we drive the most substantial trade.
Prudence protects and guides us; wit betrays,
A splendid source of ill ten thousand ways;
A certain snare to miseries immense,
A gay prerogative from common sense;
Unless strong judgment that wild thing can tame,
And break to paths of virtue and of fame.
But grant your judgment equal to the best,
Sense fills your head, and genius fires your breast;
Yet still forbear: your wit (consider well)
'Tis great to show, but greater to conceal;
As it is great to seize the golden prize
Of place or power, but greater to despise.
If still you languish for an author's name,
Think private merit less than public fame,
And fancy not to write is not to live;
Deserve, and take the great prerogative;
But ponder what it is, how dear 'twill cost
To write one page which you may justly boast.
Sense may be good, yet not deserve the press;
Who write, an awful character profess;
The world as pupil of their wisdom claim,
And for their stipend an immortal fame.
Nothing but what is solid or refined
Should dare ask public audience of mankind.
Severely weigh your learning and your wit;
Keep down your pride by what is nobly writ:
No writer, famed in your own way, pass o'er;
Much trust example, but reflection more;
More had the ancients writ, they more had taught;
Which shows some work is left for modern thought.
This weighed, perfection know, and known, adore,
Toil, burn for that, but do not aim at more:
Above, beneath it, the just limits fix,
And zealously prefer four lines to six.
Write, and re-write, blot out, and write again,
And for its swiftness ne'er applaud your pen;
Leave to the jockeys that Newmarket praise;
Slow runs the Pegasus that wins the bays
Much time for immortality to pay
Is just and wise: for less is thrown away.
Time only can mature the labouring brain;
Time is the father, and the midwife Pain:
The same good sense that makes a man excel,
Still makes him doubt he ne'er has written well.
Downright impossibilities they seek;
What man can be immortal in a week?
Excuse no fault, though beautiful, 'twill harm;
One fault shocks more than twenty beauties charm
Our age demands correctness; Addison
And you this commendable hurt have done.
Now writers find, as once Achilles found,
The whole is mortal, if a part's unsound.
He that strikes out, and strikes not out the best,
Pours lustre in, and dignifies the rest:
Give e'er so little, if what's right be there,
We praise for what you burn, and what you spare:
The part you burn smells sweet before the shrine,
And is an incense to the part divine.
Not frequent write, though you can do it well;
Men may too oft, though not too much excel.
A few good works gain fame; more sink their price;
Mankind are fickle, and hate paying twice:
They granted you writ well: what can they more
Unless you let them praise for giving o'er?
Do boldly what you do, and let your page
Smile, if it smiles, and if it rages, rage.
So faintly Lucius censures and commends,
That Lucius has no foes except his friends.
Let satire less engage you than applause;
It shows a generous mind to wink at flaws.
Is genius your's? be your's a glorious end,
Be your king's, country's, truth's, religion's friend,
The public glory by your own beget;
Run nations, run posterity, in debt;
And since the famed alone make others live,
First have that glory you presume to give.
If satire charms, strike faults, but spare the man;
'Tis dull to be as witty as you can.
Satire recoils whenever charged too high;
Round your own fate the fatal splinters fly.
As the soft plume gives swiftness to the dart,
Good-breeding sends the satire to the heart.

Painters and surgeons may the structure scan,
Genius and morals be with you the man:
Defaults in those alone should give offence;
Who strikes the person pleads his innocence.
My narrow-minded satire can't extend
To Codrus' form; I'm not so much his friend:
Himself should publish that (the world agree)
Before his works, or in the pillory.
Let him be black, fair, tall, short, thin, or fat,
Dirty or clean, I find no theme in that.
Is that called humour? it has this pretence,
'Tis neither virtue, breeding, wit, nor sense.
Unless you boast the genius of a Swift,
Beware of humour, the dull rogue's last shift.
Can others write like you? your task give o'er,
'Tis printing what was published long before.
If nought peculiar through your labours run,
They're duplicates, and twenty are but one.
Think frequently, think close, read Nature, turn
Men's manner o'er, and half your volumes burn.
To nurse with quick reflection be your strife,
Thoughts born from present objects warm from life;
When most unsought, such inspirations rise,
Slighted by fools, and cherished by the wise:
Except peculiar fame from these alone;
These make an author, these are all your own.
Like, like their Bibles, coolly men turn o'er;
Hence unexperienced children of threescore.
True, all men think of course, as all men dream,
And if they slightly think 'tis much the same.
Letters admit not of a half renown;
They give you nothing, or they give a crown.
No work e'er gained true fame, or ever can,
But what did honour to the name of man.
Weighty the subject, cogent the discourse;
Clear be the style, the very sound of force;
Easy the conduct, simple the design,
Striking the moral, and the soul divine.
Let nature art, and judgment wit, exceed;
O'er learning reason reign, o'er that your creed;
Thus Virtue's seeds, at once, and laurels, grow;
Do thus, and rise a Pope or a Despreau;
And when your genius exquisitely shines,
Live up to the full lustre of your lines.
Parts but expose those men who Virtue quit
A fallen angel is a fallen wit;
And they plead Lucifer's detested cause,
Who for bare talents challenge our applause.
Would you restore just honours to the pen?
From able writers rise to worthy men.
"Who's this with nonsense nonsense would restrain?
Who's this (they cry) so vainly schools the vain?
Who damns our trash with so much trash replete?
As three ells round, huge Cheyne rails at meat?"
Shall I with Bavius, then, my voice exalt,
And challenge all mankind to find one fault?
With huge examens overwhelm my page,
And darken reason with dogmatic rage?
As if, one tedious volume writ in rhyme,
In prose a duller could excuse the crime?
Sure next to writing, the most idle thing
Is gravely to harangue on what we sing.
At that tribunal stands the writing tribe,
Which nothing can intimidate or bribe:
Time is the judge; Time has nor friend nor foe;
False fame must wither, and the true will grow.
Armed with this truth all critics I defy;
For if I fall, by my own pen I die;
While snarlers strive with proud but fruitless pain,
To wound immortals, or to slay the slain.
Sore pressed with danger, and in awful dread
Of twenty pamphlets leveled at my head,
Thus have I forged a buckler in my brain,
Of recent form, to serve me this campaign,
And safely hope to quit the dreadful field,
Deluged with ink, and sleep behind my shield.
Unless dire Codrus rouses to the fray
In all his might, and damns me for a day.
As turns a flock of geese, and on the green
Poke out their foolish necks in awkward spleen,
(Ridiculous in rage!) to hiss, not bite,
So war their quills when sons of Dulness write.

AN EPISTLE

TO THE RIGHT HON. GEORGE LORD LANSDOWNE.

When Rome, my Lord, in her full glory shone,
And great Augustus ruled the globe alone;
While suppliant kings, in all their pomp and state,
Swarmed in his courts, and thronged his palace-gate,
Horace did oft the mighty man detain,
And soothed his breast with no ignoble strain;
Now soared aloft, now struck an humbler string
And taught the Roman genius how to sing.
Pardon, if I his freedom dare pursue,
Who know no want of Cæsar, finding you;
The Muses' friend is pleased, the Muse should press
Through circling crowds, and labour for access;
That partial to his darling he may prove,
And shining throngs for her approach remove,
To all the world industrious to proclaim
His love of arts, and boast, the glorious flame.
Long has the western world reclined her head,
Poured forth her sorrow, and bewailed her dead;
Fell Discord through her borders fiercely ranged,
And shook her nations, and her monarchs changed,
By land and sea its utmost rage employed,
Nor Heaven repaired so fast as men destroyed.
In vain kind summer's plenteous fields bestowed,
In vain the vintage liberally flowed;

Alarms from loaden boards all pleasures chased,
And robbed the rich Burgundian grape of taste;
The smiles of Nature could no blessing bring,
The fruitful Autumn, or the flowery Spring;
Time was distinguished by the sword and spear,
Not by the various aspects of the year;
The trumpet's sound proclaimed a milder sky,
And bloodshed told us when the sun was nigh.
But now, (so soon is Britain's blessing seen,
When such as you are near her glorious Queen!)
Now Peace, though long repulsed, arrives at last,
And bids us smile on all our labours past;
Bids every nation cease her wonted moan,
And every monarch call his crown his own:
To valour gentler virtues now succeed;
No longer is the great man born to bleed:
Renowned in councils, brave Argyle shall tell,
Wisdom and prowess in one breast may dwell;
Through milder tracts he soars to deathless fame,
And, without trembling, we resound his name.
No more the rising harvest whets the sword,
No longer waves uncertain of its lord:
Who cast the seed the golden sheaf shall claim,
Nor chance of battle change the master's name:
Each stream, unstained with blood, more smoothly flows,
The brighter sun a fuller day bestows;
All Nature seems to wear a cheerful face,
And thank great Anna for returning peace.
The patient thus, when on his bed of pain
No longer he invokes the gods in vain,
But rises to new life, in every field
He finds Elysium, rivers nectar yield;
Nothing so cheap and vulgar but can please,
And borrow beauties from his late disease.
Nor is it peace alone, but such a peace
As more than bids the rage of battle cease.
Death may determine war, and rest succeed,
'Cause nought survives on which our rage may feed;
In faithful friends we lose our glorious foes,
And strifes of love exalt our sweet repose.
See graceful Bolingbroke, your friend, advance,
Nor miss his Lansdown in the court of France:
So well received, so welcome, so at home,
(Blessed change of Fate!) in Bourbon's stately dome,
The monarch pleased, descending from the throne,
Will not that Anna call him all her own;
He claims a part! and looking round to find
Something might speak the fulness of his mind,
A diamond shines, which oft had touched him near,
Renewed his grief, and robbed him of a tear;
Now first with joy beheld, well placed on one
Who makes him less regret his darling son:
So dear is Anna's minister, so great
Your glorious friend in his own private state.
To make our nations longer too, in vain
Does Nature interpose the raging main:
The Gallic shore to distant Britain grows,
For Lewis Thames, the Seine for Anna flows:
From conflicts past each others worth we find,
And thence in stricter friendship now are joined:
Each wound received now pleads the cause of love,
And former injuries endearments prove.
What Briton but must prize th' illustrious sword
That cause of fear to Churchill could afford?
Who sworn to Bourbon's sceptre, but must frame
Vast thoughts of him that could brave Tallard tame?
Thus generous hatred in affection ends,
And war, which raised the foes, completes the friends.
A thousand happy consequences flow,
(The dazzling prospect makes my bosom glow)
Commerce shall lift her swelling sails, and roll
Her wealthy fleets secure from pole to pole.
The British merchant, who, with care and pain,
For many moons sees only skies and main,
When now, in view of his loved native shore,
The perils of the dreadful ocean o'er,
Cause to regret his wealth no more shall find,
Nor curse the mercy of the sea and wind:
Our hardest fare condemned to serve a foe,
And give him strength to strike a deeper blow.
Sweet Philomela providentially flies
To distant woods and streams for fresh supplies
To feed her young, and make them try the wing,
And with their tender notes attempt to sing;
Meanwhile the fowler spreads his secret snare,
And renders vain the tuneful mother's care.
Britannia's bold adventurer of late,
The foaming ocean ploughed with equal fate.
Goodness is greatness in its utmost height,
And power a curse, if not a friend to right.
To conquer is to make dissension cease,
That man may serve the King of kings in peace.
Religion now shall all her rays dispense,
And shine abroad in perfect excellence;
Else may we dread some greater curse at hand,
To scourge a thoughtless and ungrateful land.
Now war is weary, and retired to rest;
The meagre Famine, and the spotted Pest,
Deputed in her stead, may blast the day,
And sweep the relics of the sword away.
When peaceful Numa filled the Roman throne
Jove in the fulness of his glory shone:
Wise Solomon, a stranger to the sword,
Was born to raise a temple to the Lord.
Anne, too, shall build, and every sacred pile
Speak peace eternal to Britannia's isle.
Those mighty souls, whom military care
Diverted from their only great affair,
Shall bend their full united force to bless
Th' almighty Author of their late success.
And what is all the world subdued to this?
The grave sets bounds to sublunary bliss

But there are conquests to great Anna known,
Above the splendour of an earthly throne;
Conquests! whose triumph is too great within
The scanty bounds of matter to begin;
Too glorious to shine forth, till it has run
Beyond this darkness of the stars and sun,
And shall whole ages past be still, still but begun.
Heroic shades! whom war has swept away,
Look down, and smile on this auspicious day;
Now boast your deaths, to those your glory tell,
Who or at Agincourt or Cressy fell;
Then deep into eternity retire;
Of greater things than peace or war inquire;
Fully content, and unconcerned to know
What farther passes in the world below.
The bravest of mankind shall now have leave
To die but once, nor piece-meal seek the grave:
On gain or pleasure bent, we shall not meet
Sad melancholy numbers in each street,
(Owners of bones dispersed on Flandria's plain,
Or wasting in the bottom of the main)
To turn us back from joy, in tender fear
Lest it an insult of their woes appear,
And make us grudge ourselves that wealth their blood
Perhaps preserved, who starve or beg for food.
Devotion shall run pure, and disengage
From that strange fate of mixing peace with rage.
On heaven without a sin we now may call,
And guiltless to our Maker prostrate fall;
Be christians while we pray; nor in one breath
Ask mercy for ourselves, for others death.
But, O! I view with transport arts restored,
Which double use to Britain shall afford,
Secure her glory purchased in the field,
And yet for future peace sweet motives yield:
While we contemplate, on the painted wall,
The pressing Briton, and the flying Gaul,
In such bright images, such living grace,
As leave great Raphael but the second place;
Our cheeks shall glow, our heaving bosoms rise,
And martial ardour sparkle in our eyes:
Much we shall triumph in our battles past,
And yet content those battles prove our last,
Lest, while in arms for brighter fame we strive,
We lose the means to keep that fame alive.
In silent groves the birds delight to sing,
Or near the margin of a secret spring:
Now all is calm, sweet music shall improve,
Nor kindle rage, but be the nurse of love.
But what 's the warbling voice, the trembling string,
Or breathing canvass, when the Muses sing?
The muse, my Lord, your care above the rest,
With rising joy dilates my partial breast.
The thunder of the battle ceased to roar,
Ere Greece her godlike poets taught to soar;
Rome's dreadful foe, great Hannibal! was dead,
And all her warlike neighbours round her bled:
For Janus shut, her Io Pæans rung,
Before an Ovid or a Virgil sung.
A thousand various forms the Muse may wear,
(A thousand various forms become the fair)
But shines in none with more majestic mien,
Than when in state she draws the purple scene;
Calls forth her monarchs, bids her heroes rage,
And mourning Beauty melt the crowded stage;
Charms back past ages, gives to Britain's use
The noblest virtues time did e'er produce;
Leaves famed historians' boasted art behind;
They keep the soul alone, and that's confined,
Sought out with pains, and but by proxy speaks;
The hero's presence deep impression makes;
The scene his soul and body re-unite,
Furnish a voice, produce him to the sight;
Make our contemporary him that stood
High in renown, perhaps before the flood;
Make Nestor to this age advice afford,
And Hector for our service draw his sword.
More glory to an author what can bring,
Whence nobler service to his country spring,
Than from those labours which, in man's despight,
Possess him with a passion for the right?
With honest magic make the knave inclined
To pay devotion to the virtuous mind;
Through all her toils and dangers bid him rove
And with her wants and anguish fall in love?
Who hears the godlike Montezuma groan,
And does not wish the glorious pain his own?
Lend but your understanding, and their skill
Can domineer at pleasure o'er your will:
Nor is the short-lived conquest quickly past;
Shame, if not choice, will hold the convert fast.
How often have I seen the generous bowl
With pleasing force unlock a secret soul,
And steal a truth, which every sober hour
(The prose of life) had kept within her power?
The grape victorious often has prevailed,
When gold and beauty, racks and tortures, failed:
Yet when the spirit's tumult was allayed,
She mourned, perhaps, the sentiment betrayed:
But mourned too late, nor longer can deny
And on her own confession charge the lie.
Thus they whom neither the prevailing love
Of goodness here, or mercy from above,
Or fear of future pains, or human laws,
Could render advocates in Virtue's cause,
Caught by the scene, have unawares resigned
Their wonted disposition of the mind:
By slow degrees prevails the pleasing tale,
As circling glasses on our senses steal,
Till thoroughly by the Muses' banquet warmed,
The passion tossing, all the soul alarmed,
They turn mere zealots, flushed with glorious rage,
Rise in their seats, and scarce forbear the stage,
Assistance to wronged innocence to bring,
Or turn the poniard of some tyrant king.

How can they cool to villains? how subside
To dregs of vice, from such a godly pride?
To spoiling orphans how to-day return,
Who wept last night to see Monimia mourn?
In this gay school of virtue whom so fit
To govern and control the world of wit
As Talbot, Lansdown's friend, has Britain known?
Him polished Italy has called her own;
He in the lap of Elegance was bred,
And traced the Muses to their fountain-head;
But much, we hope, he will enjoy at home
What's nearer ancient than the modern Rome,
Nor fear I mention of the court of France,
When I the British genius would advance;
There, too, has Shrewsbury improved his taste,
Yet still we dare invite him to our feast,
For Corneille's sake I shall my thoughts suppress
Of Oronooko, and presume him less:
What though we wrong him? Isabella's wo
Waters those bays that shall for ever grow.
Our foes confess, nor we the praise refuse,
The drama glories in the British Muse.
The French are delicate, and nicely lead
Of close intrigue the labyrinthian thread.
Our genius more affects the grand than fine;
Our strength can make the great plain action shine:
They raise a great curiosity indeed,
From his dark maze to see the hero freed!
We rouse the affections, and that hero show
Gasping beneath some formidable blow;
They sigh; we weep: the Gallic doubt and care
We heighten into terror and despair;
Strike home, the strongest passions boldly touch,
Nor fear our audience should be pleased too much.
What's great in Nature we can greatly draw,
Nor thank for beauties the dramatic law.
The fate of Cæsar is a tale too plain
The fickle Gallic taste to entertain;
Their art would have perplexed, and interwove
The golden arras with gay flowers of love:
We know heaven made him a far greater man
Than any Cæsar in a human plan;
And such we draw him, nor are too refined
To stand affected with what Heaven designed.
'To claim attention, and the heart invade,
Shakspeare but wrote the play the Almighty made:
Our neighbour's stage art too barefaced betrays;
'Tis great Corneille at every scene we praise:
On Nature's surer aid Britannia calls;
None think of Shakspeare till the curtain falls;
Then with a sigh, returns our audience home,
From Venice, Egypt, Persia, Greece, or Rome.
France yields not to the glory of our lines,
But manly conduct of our strong designs.
That oft they think more justly we must own,
Not ancient Greece a truer sense has shown:
Greece thought but justly, they think justly too:
We sometimes err, by striving more to do.
So well are Racine's meanest persons taught,
But change a sentiment, you make a fault:
Nor dare we charge them with the want of flame:
When we boast more we own ourselves to blame.
And yet in Shakspeare something still we find
That makes me less esteem all human kind:
He made one nature, and another found:
Both in one page with master strokes abound:
His witches, fairies, and enchanted isle,
Bids us no longer at our nurses smile.
Of lost historians we almost complain,
Nor think it the creation of his brain.
Who lives when his Othello's in a trance?
With his great Talbot,* too, he conquered France.
Long may we hope brave Talbot's blood will run
In great descendants; Shakspeare has but one;
And him, my Lord, permit me not to name,
But in kind silence spare his rival's shame;—
Yet I in vain that author would suppress;
What can't be greater can not be made less:
Each reader will defeat my fruitless aim,
And to himself great Agamemnon name.
Should Shakspeare rise, unblessed with Talbot's smile,
E'en Shakspeare's self would curse this barren isle;
But if that reigning star propitious shine,
And kindly mix his gentle rays with thine,
E'en I, by far the meanest of your age,
Shall not repent your passion for the stage.
Thus did the will-almighty disallow,
No human force could pluck the golden bough,
Which left the tree with ease at Jove's command
And spare the labour of the weakest hand.
Auspicious fate! that gives me leave to write
To you, the Muses' glory and delight,
Who know to read nor false encomiums raise,
And mortify an author with your praise.
Praise wounds a noble mind when 'tis not due;
But Censure's self will please, my lord, from you.
Faults are our pride and gain, when you descend
To point them out, and teach us how to mend,
What though the great man sets his coffers wide,
That can not gratify the poet's pride,
Whose inspiration, if 'tis truly good,
Is best rewarded when best understood?
The Muses write for glory, not for gold;
'Tis far beneath their nature to be sold:
The greatest gain is scorned, but as it serves,
To speak a sense of what the Muse deserves;
The Muse, which from her Lansdowne fears no wrong,
Best judge, as well as subject of her song.
Should this great theme allure me farther still,
And I presume to use your patience ill,

* An ancestor of the Duke of Shrewsbury, who conquered France, drawn by Shakspeare.

The world would plead my cause, and none but you
Will take disgust at what I now pursue.
Since what is mean, my Muse can't raise, I'll choose
A theme that's able to exalt my Muse.
For who, not void of thought, can Granville name,
Without a spark of his immortal flame?
Whether we seek the patriot or the friend,
Let Bolingbroke, let Anna, recommend;
Whether we choose to love or to admire,
You melt the tender, and the ambitious fire.
Such native graces without thought abound,
And such familiar glories spread around,
As more incline the stander-by to raise
His value for himself, than you to praise.
Thus you befriend the most heroic way,
Bless all, on none an obligation lay,
So turned by Nature's hand for all that's well,
'Tis scarce a virtue when you most excel.
Though sweet your presence, grateful is your mien;
You to be happy, want not to be seen;
Though prized in public, you can smile alone,
Nor court an approbation but your own:
In throngs, not conscious of those eyes that gaze
In wonder fixed, though resolute to please.
You, were all blind, would still deserve applause;
The world's your glory's witness, not its cause;
That lies beyond the limits of the day,
Angels behold it, and their God obey.
You take delight in others' excellence,
A gift which Nature rarely does dispense:
Of all that breathe, 'tis you perhaps, alone
Would be well pleased to see yourself outdone.
You wish not those who show your name respect,
So little worth as might excuse neglect?
Nor are in pain lest merit you should know:
Nor shun the well-deserver as a foe;
A troublesome acquaintance that will claim
To be well used, or dye your cheek with shame.
You wish your country's good; that told, so well
Your powers are known, the event I need not tell.
When Nestor spoke, none asked if he prevailed;
That god of sweet persuasion never failed:
And such great fame had Hector's valour wrought,
Who meant he conquered, only said he fought.
When you, my Lord, to sylvan scenes retreat,
(No crowds around for pleasure or for state)
You are not cast upon a stranger land,
And wander pensive o'er the barren strand;
Nor are you by received example taught,
In toys to shun the discipline of thought;
But, unconfined by bounds of time and place,
You choose companions from all human race;
Converse with those the deluge swept away,
Or those whose midnight is Britannia's day.
Books not so much inform, as give consent
To those ideas your own thoughts present;
Your only gain, from turning volumes o'er,
Is finding cause to like yourself the more.
In Grecian sages you are only taught
With more respect to value your own thought.
Great Tully grew immortal while he drew
Those precepts we behold alive in you.
Your life is so adjusted to their schools,
It makes that history they meant for rules.
What joy, what pleasing transport, must arise,
Within your breast, and lift you to the skies,
When in each learned page that you unfold,
You find some part of your own conduct told?
So pleased and so surprised Æneas stood,
And such triumphant raptures fired his blood,
When far from Trojan shores the hero spied
His story shining forth in all its pride;
Admired himself, and saw his actions stand
The praise and wonder of a foreign land.
He knows not half his being who's confined
In converse and reflection on mankind:
Your soul, which understands her charter well,
Disdains imprisoned by those skies to dwell;
Ranges eternity without the leave
Of death, nor waits the passage of the grave.
When pains eternal, and eternal bliss,
When these high cares your weary thoughts dismiss,
In heavenly numbers you your soul unbend,
And for your ease to deathless fame descend.
Ye kings! would ye true greatness understand?
Read Seneca, grown rich in Granville's hands.*
Behold the glories of your life complete!
Still at a flow, and permanently great:
New moments shed new pleasures as they fly,
And yet your greatest is that you must die.
Thus Anna saw, and raised you to the seat
Of honour, and confessed her servant great;
Confessed, not made him such; for faithful Fame
Her trumpet swelled long since with Granville's name.
Though you in modesty the title wear,
Your name shall be the title of your heir;
Farther than ermine make his glory known,
And cast in shades the favour of a throne.
From thrones the beam of high distinction springs,
The soul's endowments from the King of kings.
Lo, one great day calls forth ten mighty peers!
Produce ten Granvilles in five thousand years.
Anna! be thou content to fix the fate
Of various kingdoms, and control the great:
But, O! to bid thy Granville brighter shine!
To him that great prerogative resign,
Who the sun's height can raise at pleasure higher
His lamp illumine, set his flames on fire.
Yet still one bliss, one glory, I forbear,
A darling friend whom near your heart you wear

* See his Lordship's tragedy, entitled Heroic Love

That lovely youth, my lord, whom you must blame
That I grow thus familiar with your name.
He's friendly, open, in his conduct nice;
Nor serve these virtues to atone for vice:
Vice he has none, or such as none wish less,
But friends, indeed, good-nature in excess.
You can not boast the merit of a choice
In making him your own; 'twas Nature's voice,
Which called too loud by man to be withstood,
Pleading a tie far nearer than of blood;
Similitude of manners, such a mind,
As makes you less the wonder of mankind.
Such case his common converse recommends,
As he ne'er felt a passion, but his friend's;
Yet fixed his principles beyond the force
Of all beneath the sun to bend his course.*
Thus the tall cedar, beautiful and fair,
Flatters the motions of the wanton air,
Salutes each passing breeze with head reclined,
The pliant branches dance in every wind;
But fixed the stem, her upright state maintains,
And all the fury of the North disdains.
How are ye blessed in such a matchless friend!
Alas! with me the joys of friendship end.
O Harrison! I must, I will, complain;
Tears sooth the soul's distress, though shed in vain.
Did'st thou return, and bless thy native shore
With welcome peace, and is my friend no more!—
Thy task was early done, and I must own
Death kind to thee, but ah! to thee alone.
But 'tis in me a vanity to mourn,
The sorrows of the great thy tomb adorn;
Strafford and Bolingbroke the loss perceive;
They grieve, and make thee envied in thy grave.
With aching heart and a foreboding mind,
I night to day in painful journey joined,
When first informed of his approaching fate,
But reached the partner of my soul too late.
'Twas past; his cheek was cold; that tuneful tongue,
Which Isis charmed with its melodious song,
Now languished, wanted strength to speak his pain,
Scarce raised a feeble groan, and sunk again:
Each art of life in which he bore a part,
Shot like an arrow through my bleeding heart.
To what served all his promised wealth and power,
But more to load that most unhappy hour?
Yet still prevailed the greatness of his mind,
That not in health, or life itself, confined,
Felt through his mortal pangs Britannia's peace,
Mounted to joy, and smiled in Death's embrace.
His spirit now just ready to resign,
No longer now his own, no longer mine,
He grasps my hand, his swimming eyeballs roll;
My hand he grasps, and enters in my soul;
Then with a groan—Support me—O! beware
Of holding worth, however great, too dear!*
Pardon, my Lord, the privilege of grief,
That in untimely freedom seeks relief:
To better fate your love I recommend;
Oh! may you never lose so dear a friend!
May nothing interrupt your happy hours!
Enjoy the blessings peace on Europe showers:
Nor yet disdain these blessings to adorn;
To make the muse immortal you was born.
Sing! and in latest time, when story 's dark,
This period your surviving fame shall mark;
Save from the gulf of years this glorious age,
And thus illustrate their historian's page.
The crown of Spain in doubtful balance hung
And Anna Britain swayed when Granville sung;
That noted year Europa sheathed her sword,
When this great man was first saluted Lord.

* His Lorship's nephew who took orders.

A LETTER TO MR. TICKELL.

Occasioned by the death of the
RIGHT HONOURABLE JOSEPH ADDISON.

——Tu nunc eris alter ab illo.—*Virg.*

O long with me in Oxford groves confined,
In social arts and sacred friendship joined;
Fair Isis' sorrow, and fair Isis' boast,
Lost from her side, but fortunately lost;
Thy wonted aid, my dear companion! bring,
And teach me thy departed friend to sing:
A darling theme! once powerful to inspire,
And now to melt the Muses' mournful choir:
Now, and now first, we freely dare commend
His modest worth, nor shall our praise offend.
Early he bloomed amid the learned train,
And ravished Isis listened to his strain.
See, see, she cried, old Maro's muse appears
Waked from her slumber of two thousand years:
Her finished charms to Addison she brings,
Thinks in his thought, and in his number sings.
All read transported his pure classic page;
Read and forget their climate and their age.
The state, when now his rising fame was known,
The unrivaled genius challenged for her own,
Nor would that one for scenes or actions strong,
Should let a life evaporate in song.
As health and strength the brightest charms dispense,
Wit is the blossom of the soundest sense:
Yet few, how few, with lofty thoughts inspired,
With quickness pointed, and with rapture fired,
In conscious pride their own importance find,
Blind to themselves, as the hard world is blind!

* The Author here bewails that most ingenious gentleman Mr. William Harrison, fellow of New-College, Oxon.

Wit they esteem a gay but worthless power,
The slight amusement of a leisure hour,
Unmindful that, concealed from vulgar eyes,
Majestic Wisdom wears the bright disguise.
Poor Dido fondled thus, with idle joy,
Dread Cupid lurking in the Trojan boy;
Lightly she toyed and trifled with his charms,
And knew not that a god was in her arms.
Who greatest excellence of thought could boast,
In action, too, have been distinguished most:
This Sommers knew, and Addison sent forth
From the malignant regions of the north,
To be matured in more indulgent skies,
Where all the vigour of the soul can rise;
Through warmer veins where sprightlier spirits run,
And sense, enlivened, sparkles in the sun.
With secret pain the prudent patriot gave
The hopes of Britain to the rolling wave,
Anxious, the charge to all the stars resigned,
And placed a confidence in sea and wind.
Ausonia soon received her wondering guest,
And equal wonder in her turn confest,
To see her fervours rivaled by the pole,
Her lustre beaming from a northern soul:
In like surprise was her Æneas lost,
To find his picture grace a foreign coast.
Now the wide field of Europe he surveys,
Compares her kings, her thrones and empires weighs,
In ripened judgment and consummate thought;
Great work! By Nassau's favour cheaply bought.
He now returns to Britain, a support,
Wise in her senate, graceful in her court;
And when the public welfare would permit,
The source of learning, and the soul of wit.
O Warwick! (whom the muse is fond to name,
And kindles, conscious of her future theme)
O Warwick! by divine contagion bright,
How early didst thou catch his radiant light!
By him inspired, how shine before thy time,
And leave thy years, and leap into thy prime!
On some warm bank, thus, fortunately borne,
A rose-bud opens to a summer's morn,
Full blown ere noon her fragrant pride displays,
And shows the abundance of her purple rays.
Wit, as her bays, was once a barren tree;
We now, surprised, her fruitful branches see;
Or, orange-like, till his auspicious time
It grew indeed, but shivered in our clime:
He first the plant to richer gardens led,
And fixed, indulgent, in a warmer bed:
The nation, pleased, enjoys the rich produce,
And gathers from her ornament her use.
When loose from public cares, the grove he sought,
And filled the leisure interval with thought,
The various labours of his easy page,
A chance amusement, polished half an age.
Beyond this truth old bards could scarce invent,
Who durst to frame a world by accident.
What he has sung, how early, and how well,
The Thames shall boast, and Roman Tiber tell.
A glory more sublime remains in store,
Since such his talents, that he sung no more.
No fuller proof of power the Almighty gave,
Making the sea, than curbing her proud wave.
Nought can the genius of his works transcend,
But their fair purpose and important end;
To rouse the war for injured Europe's laws,
To steel the patriot in great Brunswick's cause;
With virtue's charms to kindle sacred love,
Or paint the eternal bowers of bliss above.
Where had'st thou room, great Author! where to roll
The mighty theme of an immortal soul?
Through paths unknown, unbeaten, whence were brought
Thy proofs so strong for immaterial thought?
One let me join, all others may excel,
"How could a mortal essence think so well?"
But why so large in the great writer's praise?
More lofty subjects should my numbers raise:
In him (illustrious rivalry!) contend
The statesman, patriot, Christian, and the friend!
His glory such it borders on disgrace
To say he sung the best of human race.
In joy once joined, in sorrow now for years,
Partner in grief, and brother of my tears,
Tickell! accept this verse, thy mournful due;
Thou farther shalt the sacred theme pursue;
And as thy strain describes the matchless man,
Thy life shall second what thy muse began.
Though sweet in numbers, though a fire divine
Dart through the whole, and burn in every line,
Who strives not for that excellence he draws,
Is stained by fame, and suffers for applause.
But haste to thy illustrious task; prepare
The noble work well trusted to thy care,
The gift bequeathed by Addison's command,
To Craggs made sacred by his dying hand.
Collect the labours, join the various rays,
The scattered light in one united blaze;
Then bear to him so true, so truly loved,
In life distinguished, and in death approved
The immortal legacy. He hangs awhile
In generous anguish o'er the glorious pile;
With anxious pleasure the known page reviews,
And the dear pledge with falling tears bedews.
What though thy tears poured o'er thy godlike friend,
Thy other cares for Britain's weal suspend?
Think not, O patriot! while thy eyes o'erflow,
Those cares suspended for a private wo;
Thy love to him is to thy country shown:
He mourns for her who mourns for Addison.

Odes.

OCEAN: AN ODE.

OCCASIONED BY HIS MAJESTY'S ROYAL ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE SEA SERVICE.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

AN ODE TO THE KING.

I THINK myself obliged to recommend to you a consideration of the greatest importance, and I should look upon it as a great happiness, if, at the beginning of my reign, I could see the foundation laid of so great and necessary a work as the increase and encouragement of our seamen in general, that they may be invited, rather than compelled by force and violence, to enter into the service of their country as oft as occasion shall require it; a consideration worthy the representatives of a people great and flourishing in trade and navigation. This leads me to mention to you the case of Greenwich Hospital, that care may be taken, by some addition to that fund, to render comfortable and effectual that charitable provision for the support and maintenance of our seamen, worn out, and become decrepit by age and infirmities, in the service of their country.—*Speech, Jan.* 27, 1727-8.

TO THE KING.

OLD Ocean's praise
Demands my lays;
A truly British theme I sing;
A theme so great
I dare complete,
And join with Ocean Ocean's King.

To gods and kings,
The poet sings;
To kings and gods the muse is dear;
The muse inspires
With all her fires;
Begin, my soul! thy bold career.

From awful state,
From high debate,
From morning-splendours of a crown,
From homage paid,
From empires weighed
From plans of blessings and renown;

Great monarch! bow
Thy beaming brow;
To thee I strike the sounding lyre,
With proud design
In verse to shine;
To rival Greek and Roman fire.

The Roman ode
Majestic flowed,
Its streams divinely clear and strong;
Its sense and sound
Thebes rolled profound:
The torrent roared and foamed along.

Let Thebes, nor Rome,
So famed, presume
To triumph o'er a northern isle;
Late time shall know
The north can glow,
If dread Augustus deign to smile.

The work is done!
The distant sun
His smile supplies! exalts my voice
Through earth's wide bound
Shall George resound,
My theme, by duty, and by choice.

The naval crown
Is all his own!
Our fleet, if War or commerce call,
His will performs
Through waves and storms
And rides in triumph round the ball.

Since then the main
Sublimes my strain,
To whom should I address my song?
To whom but thee?
The boundless sea,
And grateful muse to George belong.

Hail, mighty theme!
Rich mine of fame!
If gods invoked extend their aid;
Hail, subject new!
As Britain's due
Reserved by the Pierian maid.

Durst Homer's muse,
Or Pindar's, choose
To pour the billows on his string?
No, both defraud
The tuneful god:
Scarce more sublime, when Jove they sing.

No former race
With strong embrace,
This theme to ravish durst aspire;
With virgin charms
My soul it warms,
And melts melodious on my lyre.

Now low, now high,
My fingers fly,
Now pause, and now fresh music spring;
Now dance, now creep,
Now dive, now sweep,
And fetch the sound from every string.

Now numbers rise,
Like virgin sighs;
The soft Favonians melt away;
As from the north
Now rushes forth
A blast, that thunders in my lay.

My lays I file
With curious toil;
Ye Graces turn the glowing lines;
On anvils neat
Your strokes repeat,
And every stroke the work refines!

How music charms!
How metre warms!
Parent of actions good and brave!
How vice it tames!
And worth inflames!
And holds proud empire o'er the grave!

Jove marked for man
A scanty span,
But lent him wings to fly his doom;
Wit scorns the grave;
To wit he gave
The life of gods! immortal bloom!

Since years will fly,
And pleasures die,
Day after day, as years advance;
Since while life lasts
Joy suffers blasts
From frowning Fate and fickle Chance;

Nor life is long,
But soon we throng,
Like autumn leaves, Death's pallid shore;
We make at least
Of bad the best,
If in life's phantom, Fame, we soar.

Our strains divide
The laurel's pride;
With those we lift to life we live;
By fame enrolled
With heroes bold,
And share the blessings which we give.

What hero's praise
Can fire my lays
Like his with whom my lay begun?
"Justice sincere,
And courage clear,
Rise the two columns of his throne.

"How formed for sway!
Who look obey,
They read the monarch in his port:
Their love and awe
Supply the law,
And his own lustre makes the court.

"But shines supreme,
Where heroes flame;
In war's high-hearted pomp he prides!
By godlike arts
Enthroned in hearts,
Our bosom-lord o'er wills presides."

Our factions end!
The nations bend!
For when Britannia's sons, combined
In fair array,
All march one way;
They march the terror of mankind.

If equal all
Who tread the ball,
Our bounded prospect, here, would end
But heroes prove
As steps to Jove,
By which our thoughts, with ease, ascend.

From what we view
We take the clue
Which leads from great to greater things,
Men doubt no more,
But gods adore,
When such resemblance shines in kings.

On yonder height,
What golden light
Triumphant shines, and shines alone.
Unrivaled blaze!
The nation's gaze!
'Tis not the sun; 'tis Britain's throne.

Our monarch there,
Reared high in air,
Should tempests rise, disdains to bend;
Like British oak,
Derides the stroke;
His blooming honours far extend!

Beneath them lies,
With lifted eyes,
Fair Albion, like an amorous maid;
While interest wings
Bold foreign kings
To fly, like eagles, to his shade.

At his proud foot
The sea, poured out,
Immortal nourishment supplies;
Thence wealth, and state,
And power, and fate,
Which Europe reads in George's eyes.

OCEAN.

AN ODE.

CONCLUDING WITH A WISH.

Let the sea make a noise, let the floods clap their hands.
Psalm xcviii.

Sweet rural scene
Of flocks and green!
At careless ease my limbs are spread:
All nature still
But yonder rill,
And listening pines nod o'er my head.

In prospect wide
The boundless tide!
Waves cease to foam, and winds to roar;
Without a breeze
The curling seas
Dance on in measure to the shore.

Who sings the source
Of wealth and force?
Vast field of commerce, and big war
Where wonders dwell!
Where terrors swell!
And Neptune thunders from his car?

Where, where are they
Whom Pœan's ray
Has touched, and bid divinely rave?—
What! none aspire?
I snatch the lyre,
And plunge into the foaming wave.

The wave resounds!
The rock rebounds!
The Nereids to my song reply!
I lead the choir,
And they conspire,
With voice and shell, to lift it high.

They spread in air
Their bosoms fair,
Their verdant tresses pour behind;
The billows beat
With nimble feet,
With notes triumphant swell the wind.

Who love the shore,
Let those adore
The god Apollo, and his nine,
Parnassus' hill,
And Orpheus' skill,
But let Arion's harp be mine.

The main! the main!
Is Britain's reign;
Her strength, her glory, is her fleet:
The main! the main!
Be Britain's strain;
As Triton's strong, as Syren's sweet.

Through nature wide
Is nought descried
So rich in pleasure or surprise;
When all-serene,
How sweet the scene;
How dreadful when the billows rise!

And storms deface
The fluid glass,
In which erewhile Britannia, fair,
Look down with pride,
Like Ocean's bride,
Adjusting her majestic air!

When tempests cease,
And, hushed in peace,
The flattened surges smoothly spread,
Deep silence keep,
And seem to sleep
Recumbent on their oozy bed.

With what a trance
The level glance,
Unbroken shoots along the seas!
Which tempt from shore
The painted oar,
And every canvass courts the breeze!

When rushes forth
The frowning North
On black'ning billows, with what dread
My shuddering soul
Beholds them roll,
And hears their roarings o'er my head!

With terror mark
Yon flying bark!
Now centre-deep descend the brave;
Now tossed on high,
It takes the sky,
A feather on the towering wave!

Now spins around
In whirls profound:
Now whelmed, now pendant near the clouds;
Now, stunned, it reels
Midst thunder's peals,
And now fierce lightning fires the shrouds.

All ether burns
Chaos returns!
And blends, once more, the seas and skies;
No space between
Thy bosom green,
O Deep! and the blue concave lies.

The northern blast,
The shattered mast,
The syrt, the whirlpool, and the rock,
The breaking spout,
The stars gone out,
The boiling streight, the monster shock.

Let others fear;
To Britain dear
Whate'er promotes her daring claim;
Those terrors charm
Which keeps her warm
In chase of honest gain or fame.

The stars are bright
To cheer the night,
And shed, through shadows, tempered fire;
And Phœbus flames,
With burnished beams,
Which some adore, and all admire.

Are then the seas
Outshone by these?
Bright Thetis! thou art not outshone:
With kinder beams,
And softer gleams,
Thy bosom wears them as thy own.

There, set in green,
Gold stars are seen,
A mantle rich, thy charms to wrap:
And when the sun
His race has run,
He falls enamoured in thy lap.

Those clouds, whose dyes
Adorn the skies,
That silver snow, that pearly rain,
Has Phœbus stole,
To grace the pole,
The plunder of the invaded main!

The gaudy bow,
Whose colours glow,
Whose arch with so much skill is bent,
To Phœbus' ray,
Which paints so gay,
By thee the watery woof was lent.

In chambers deep,
Where waters sleep,
What unknown treasures pave the floor!
The pearl, in rows,
Pale lustre throws;
The wealth immense which storms devour.

From Indian mines,
With proud designs,
The merchant, swollen, digs golden ore;
The tempests rise
And seize the prize,
And toss him, breathless, on the shore.

His son complains
In pious strains;
"Ah! cruel thirst of gold," he cries;
Then ploughs the main
In zeal for gain,
The tears yet swelling in his eyes,

Thou watery vast!
What mounds are cast
To bar thy dreadful flowings o'er!
Thy proudest foam
Must know its home;
But rage of gold disdains a shore.

Gold pleasure buys;
But pleasure dies;
Too soon the gross fruition cloys;
Though raptures court,
The sense is short;
But virtue kindles living joys!

Joys felt alone!
Joys asked of none!
Which Time's and Fortune's arrows miss;
Joys that subsist,
Though fates resist,
An unprecarious, endless bliss!

The soul refined
Is most inclined
To every moral excellence;
All vice is dull,
A knave's a fool,
And virtue is the child of Sense.

The virtuous mind,
Nor wave nor wind,
Nor civil rage, nor tyrant's frown,
The shaken ball,
Nor planet's fall,
From its firm basis can dethrone.

This Britain knows,
And therefore glows
With generous passions, and expends
Her wealth and zeal
On public weal,
And brightens both by godlike ends.

What end so great
As that which late
Awoke the genius of the Main;
Which towering rose,
With George to close,
And rival great Eliza's reign?

A voice has flown
From Britain's throne
To reinflame a grand design;
That voice shall rear
Yon fabric fair,*
As nature's rose at the divine.

When Nature sprung
Blessed angels sung,
And shouted o'er the rising ball:

* A new fund for Greenwich hospital, recommended from the throne.

For strains as high
As man's can fly
The sea-devoted honours call.

From boisterous seas,
The lap of Ease
Receives our wounded and our old;
High domes ascend!
Stretched arches bend;
Proud columns swell! wide gates unfold!

So sleeps the grain,
In fostering rain,
And vital beams, till Jove descend;
Then bursts the root,
The verdures shoot,
And earth, enrich, adorn, defend.

Here, soft reclined,
From wave, from wind,
And Fortune's tempests, safe ashore,
To cheat their care,
Of former war
They talk the pleasing shadows o'er.

In lengthened tales
Our fleet prevails;
In tales, the lenitives of age!
And o'er the bowl
They fire the soul
Of listening youth to martial rage.

The story done,
Their setting sun,
Serenely smiling down the west,
In soft decay
They drop away;
And honour leads them to their rest.

Unhappy they!
And falsely gay!
Who bask for ever in success:
A constant feast
Quite palls the taste,
And long enjoyment is distress.

What charms us most,
Our joy, our boast,
Familiar, loses all its gloss;
And gold refined
The sated mind
Fastidious turns to perfect dross.

When, after toil,
His native soil
The panting mariner regains,
What transport flows
From bare repose?
We reap our pleasure from our pains.

Ye warlike! slain
Beneath the main,
Wrapt in a watery winding sheet,
Who bought with blood
Your country's good,
Your country's full-blown glory greet.*

What powerful charm
Can Death disarm?
Your long, your iron slumbers break:
By Jove, by Fame,
By George's name,
Awake! awake! awake!

Our joy so proud,
Our shout so loud,
Without a charm the dead might hear!
And, see! they rouse
Their awful brows,
Deep-scarred, from oozy pillows rear!

With spiral shell,
Full-blasted, tell,
That all your watery realms should ring;
Your pearl alcoves,
Your coral groves,
Should echo theirs and Britain's king.

As long as stars
Guide mariners,
As Carolina's virtues please,
Or suns invite
The ravished sight,
The British flag shall sweep the seas

Peculiar both!
Our soil's strong growth,
And our bold natives' hardy mind;
Sure heaven bespoke
Our hearts and oak,
To give a master to mankind.

That noblest birth
Of teeming earth,
Of forest fair that daughter proud,
To foreign coasts
Our grandeur boasts,
And Britain's pleasure speaks aloud:

Now, big with war,
Sends fate from far,
If rebel realms their fate demand;
Now sumptuous spoils
Of foreign soils
Pours in the bosom of our land.

Hence Britain lays
In scales, and weighs
The fates of kingdoms and of kings;
And as she frowns,
Or smiles, on crowns,
A night or day of glory springs.

* Written soon after King George the First's accession.

Thus Ocean swells
The streams and rills,
And to their borders lifts them high,
Or else withdraws
The mighty cause,
And leaves their famished channels dry.

How mixed, how frail,
How sure to fail,
Is every pleasure of mankind!
A damp destroys
My blooming joys,
While Britain's glory fires my mind:

For who can gaze
On restless seas,
Unstruck with life's more restless state?
Where all are tossed,
And most are lost,
By tides of passion, blasts of fate,

The world's the main,
How vexed! how vain!
Ambition swells, and anger foams;
May good men find,
Beneath the wind,
A noiseless shore, unruffled homes!

The public scene
Of hardened men,
Teach me, O teach me to despise!
The world few know,
But to their wo,
Our crimes with our experience rise.

All tender sense
Is banished thence,
All maiden Nature's first alarms;
What shocked before
Disgusts no more,
And what disgusted has its charms.

In landscapes green,
True Bliss is seen,
With Innocence, in shades, she sports;
In wealthy towns
Proud Labour frowns,
And painted Sorrow smiles in courts.

These scenes untried
Seduced my pride,
To Fortune's arrow bared my breast,
Till Wisdom came,
A hoary dame,
And told me pleasure was in rest.

"Oh may I steal
Along the vale
Of humble life, secure from foes!
My friend sincere,
My judgment clear,
And gentle business my repose.

"My mind be strong,
To combat wrong;
Grateful, O King! for favours shown;
Soft to complain,
For others' pain,
And bold to triumph o'er my own!

"(When Fortune's kind)
Acute to find,
And warm to relish every boon,
And wise to still
Fantastic ill,
Whose frightful spectres stalk at noon.

"No fruitless toils,
No brainless broils,
Each moment leveled at the mark!
Our day so short
Invites no sport;
Be sad and solemn when 'tis dark.

"Yet Prudence still
Rein thou my will!
What's most important make most dear!
For 'tis in this
Resides true Bliss;
True Bliss, a deity severe.

"When temper leans
To gayer scenes,
And serious life void moments spares,
The sylvan chase
My sinews brace!
Or song unbend my mind from cares!

"Nor shun, my soul,
The genial bowl,
Where mirth, good-nature, spirit, flow!
Ingredients these
Above to please
The laughing gods, the wise below.

"Though rich the vine,
More wit than wine,
More sense than wit, good-will, than art,
May I provide!
Fair truth, my pride!
My joy, the converse of the heart!

"The gloomy brow,
The broken vow,
To distant climes, ye gods! remove;
The nobly-souled
Their commerce hold
With words of truth, and looks of love.

"Oh glorious aim!
Oh wealth supreme!
Divine benevolence of soul!
That greatly glows,
And freely flows,
And in one blessing grasps the whole!

"Prophetic schemes,
And golden dreams,
May I, unsanguine cast away;
Have what I have,
And live, not leave,
Enamoured of the present day!

"My hours my own,
My faults unknown,
My chief revenue in content;
Then leave one beam
Of honest fame,
And scorn the laboured monument!

"Unhurt my urn,
Till that great turn
When mighty Nature's self shall die;
Time cease to glide
With human pride,
Sunk in the ocean of eternity."

SEA-PIECE.

CONTAINING, I. THE BRITISH SAILOR'S EXULTATION. II. HIS PRAYER BEFORE ENGAGEMENT.

DEDICATION TO MR. VOLTAIRE.

My Muse, a bird of passage, flies
From frozen clime to milder skies:
From chilling blasts she seeks thy cheering beam,
A beam of favour here denied:
Conscious of faults, her blushing pride
Hopes an asylum in so great a name.

To dive full deep in ancient days,*
The warrior's ardent deeds to raise,
And monarchs aggrandize—the glory thine;
Thine is the drama, how renowned;
Thine Epic's loftier trump to sound;——
But let Arion's sea-strung harp be mine.
But where's his dolphin? knowest thou where?
May that be found in thee, Voltaire!
Save thou from harm my plunge into the wave:
How will thy name illustrious raise
My sinking song! Mere mortal lays,
So patronized, are rescued from the grave.

"Tell me," say'st thou, "who courts my smile?
What stranger strayed from yonder isle?"—
No stranger Sir! though born in foreign climes;
On Dorset Downs, when Milton's page,
With Sin and Death provoked thy rage,
Thy rage provoked, who soothed with gentle rhymes.

Who kindly couched thy censure's eye,
And gave thee clearly to descry
Sound judgment giving law to fancy strong:
Who half-inclined thee to confess,
Nor could thy modesty do less,
That Milton's blindness lay not in his song.

But such debates long since are flown
For ever set the suns that shone
On airy pastimes, ere our brows were gray:
How shortly shall we both forget,
To thee, my patron, I my debt,
And thou to thine for Prussia's golden key

The present, in oblivion cast,
Full soon shall sleep, as sleeps the past;
Full soon the wide distinction die between
The frowns and favours of the great;
High-flushed Success, and pale Defeat
The Gallic gaiety, and British spleen.

Ye winged, ye rapid moments! stay:
Oh, Friend! as deaf, as rapid, they:
Life's little drama done, the curtain falls!-
Dost thou not hear it? I can hear,
Though nothing strikes the listening ear;
Time groans his last; Eternal loudly calls!

Nor calls in vain; the call inspires
Far other counsels and desires,
Than once prevailed: we stand on higher ground:
What scenes we see!—Exalted aim!
With ardours new on spirits flame;
Ambition blessed! with more than laurels crowned.

ODE THE FIRST.

THE BRITISH SAILOR'S EXULTATION.

In lofty sounds let those delight
Who brave the foe, but fear the fight,
And bold in word, of arms decline the stroke;
'Tis mean to boast, but great to lend
To foes the counsel of a friend,
And warn them of the vengeance they provoke.

From whence arise these loud alarms?
Why gleams the South with brandished arms?
War, bathed in blood, from cursed ambition springs;
Ambition mean, ignoble pride!
Perhaps their ardours may subside,
When weighed the wonders Britain's sailor sings.

Hear, and revere. At Britain's nod,
From each enchanted grove and wood,
Hastes the huge oak, or shapeless forest leaves,
The mountain pines assume new forms,
Spread canvass wings, and fly through storms,
And ride o'er rocks, and dance on foaming waves.

* Annals of the Emperor Charles XII. Lewis XIV.

She nods again; the labouring earth
Discloses a tremendous birth;
In smoking rivers runs her molten ore!
Thence monsters of enormous size,
And hideous aspect, threatening rise;
Flame from the deck, from trembling bastions roar.

These ministers of Fate fulfil,
On empires wide, an island's will,
When thrones unjust wake vengeance. Know, ye powers!
In sudden night, and ponderous balls,
And floods of flame, the tempest falls,
When braved Britannia's awful senate lowers.

In her grand council* she surveys,
In patriot picture, what may raise,
Of insolent attempts, a warm disdain;
From hope's triumphant summit thrown,
Like darted lightning, swiftly down
The wealth of Ind', and confidence of Spain.

Britannia sheaths her courage keen,
And spares her nitrous magazine;
Her cannon slumber, till the proud aspire,
And leave all law below them, then they blaze!
They thunder from resounding seas,
Touched by their injured master's soul of fire.

Then furies rise! the battle raves!
And rends the skies, and warms the waves!
And calls a tempest from the peaceful deep,
In spite of Nature, spite of Jove,
While all serene, and hushed above,
Tumultuous winds in azure chambers sleep.

A thousand deaths the bursting bomb
Hurls from her disemboweled womb;
Chained, glowing globes in dread alliance joined,
Red-winged by strong sulphureous blasts,
Sweep in black whirlwinds, men and masts,
And leave singed, naked, blood-drowned, decks behind.

Dwarf laurels rise in tented fields;
The wreath immortal Ocean yields;
There War's whole sting is shot, whole fire is spent,
Whole glory blooms. How pale, how tame,
How lambent, is Bellona's flame!
How her storms languish on the Continent!

From the dread front of ancient war
Less terror frowned; her scythed car,
Her castled elephant, and battering beam,
Stoop to those engines which deny
Superior terrors to the sky,
And boast their clouds, their thunder, and their flame.

The flame, the thunder, and the cloud,
The night by day, the sea of blood,
Hosts whirled in air, the yell of sinking throngs,
The graveless dead an ocean warmed,
A firmament by mortals stormed,
To patient Britain's angry brow belongs.

Or do I dream? or do I rave?
Or see I Vulcan's sooty cave,
Where Jove's red bolts the giant-brothers frame?
Those swarthy gods of toil and heat,
Loud peals on mountain anvils beat,
And panting tempests rouse the roaring flame.

Ye sons of Ætna! hear my call,
Unfinished let those baubles fall,
Yon shield of Mars, Minerva's helmet blue:
Your strokes suspend, ye brawny throng!
Charmed by the magic of my song,
Drop the feigned thunder, and attempt the true

Begin; and, first take rapid flight,*
Fierce flame, and clouds of thickest night,
And ghastly terror, paler than the dead;
Then borrow from the North his roar,
Mix groans and death; one phial pour
Of wronged Britannia's wrath; and it is made;
Gaul starts and trembles—at your dreadful trade.

* House of Lords.

* Alluding to Virgil's description of thunder.

ODE THE SECOND.

IN WHICH IS

THE SAILOR'S PRAYER BEFORE ENGAGEMENT

So formed the bolt ordained to break
Gaul's haughty plan, and Bourbon shake,
If Britain's crimes support not Britain's foes,
And edge their swords. O power Divine!
If blessed by thee the bold design,
Embattled hosts a single arm o'erthrows.

Ye warlike dead! who fell of old
In Britain's cause, by Fame enrolled
In deathless annal! deathless deeds inspire:
From oozy beds, for Britain's sake,
Awake, illustrious Chiefs! awake,
And kindle in your sons paternal fire.

The day commissioned from above,
Our worth to weigh, our hearts to prove,
If war's full shock too feeble to sustain,
Or firm to stand its final blow,
When vital streams of blood shall flow,
And turn to crimson the discoloured main

That day 's arrived, that fatal hour!
"Hear us, O hear, Almighty power!
Our guide in counsel, and our strength in fight
Now War's important dye is thrown,
If left the day to man alone,
How blind is Wisdom, and how weak is Might!

"Let prostrate hearts, and awful fear,
And deep remorse, and sighs sincere,
For Britain's guilt the wrath divine appease;
A wrath more formidable far
Than angry Nature's wasteful war,
The whirl of tempests, and the roar of seas.

"From out the deep to thee we cry,
To thee, at Nature's helm on high!
Steer thou our conduct, dread Omnipotence!
To thee for succour we resort;
Thy favour is our only port;
Our only rock of safety thy defence.

"O Thou! to whom the lions roar,
And not unheard, thy boon implore!
Thy throne our bursts of cannon loud invoke:
Thou canst arrest the flying ball,
Or send it back, and bid it fall
On those from whose proud deck the thunder broke.

"Britain in vain extends her care
To climes remote* for aids in war;
Still farther must it stretch to crush the foe:
There's one alliance, one alone,
Can crown her arms, or fix her throne,
And that alliance is not found below.

"Ally Supreme! we turn to thee;
We learn obedience from the sea;
With seas and winds, henceforth, thy laws fulfil;
'Tis thine our blood to freeze or warm,
To rouse or hush the martial storm,
And turn the tide of conquest at thy will.

"'Tis thine to beam sublime renown,
Or quench the glories of a crown;
'Tis thine to doom, 'tis thine from death to free,
To turn aside his leveled dart,
Or pluck it from the bleeding heart:—
There, we cast anchor, we confide in thee.

"Thou! who hast taught the North to roar,
And streaming lights† nocturnal pour
Of frightful aspect! when proud foes invade,
Their blasted pride with dread to seize,
Did Britain's flags, as meteors, blaze,
And George depute to thunder in thy stead.

"The right alone is bold and strong;
Black hovering clouds appal the wrong
With dread of vengeance.—Nature's awful Sire!
Less than one moment shouldst thou frown,
Where is Puissance and Renown?
Thrones tremble, empires sink, or worlds expire.

"Let George the just chastise the vain:
Thou! who dost curb the rebel main,
To mount the shore when boiling billows rave!
Bid George repel a bolder tide,
The boundless swell of Gallic pride,
And check Ambition's overwhelming wave.

"And when (all milder means withstood)
Ambition tamed by loss of blood
Regains her reason; then, on angels' wings,
Let peace descend, and shouting greet,
With peals of joy, Britannia's fleet,
How richly freighted it triumphant brings
The poise of kingdoms and the fate of kings."

* Russia. † Aurora Borealis.

IMPERIUM PELAGI.

A NAVAL LYRIC.

WRITTEN IN IMITATION OF PINDAR'S SPIRIT.

Occasioned by His Majesty's return from Hanover, Sept. 1729, and the succeeding Peace.

Monte decurrens velut amnis, imbres
Quem super notas aluere ripas,
Fervet, immensusque ruit profundo
Pindarus ore.
Concines lætosque dies, et urbis
Publicum Indum, super impetrato
Fortis Augusti reditu. *Hor.*

PREFACE.

A PINDARIC carries a formidable sound; but there is nothing formidable in the true nature of it, of which (with utmost submission) I conceive the critics have hitherto entertained a false idea. Pindar is as natural as Anacreon, though not so familiar; as a fixed star is as much in the bounds of nature as a flower of the field, though less obvious, and of greater dignity. This is not the received notion of Pindar: I shall therefore soon support at large the hint which is now given.

Trade is a very noble subject in itself, more proper than any for an Englishman, and particularly seasonable at this juncture.

We have more specimens of good writing in every province than in the sublime, our two famous epic poems excepted. I was willing to make an attempt where I had the fewest rivals.

If, on reading this Ode, any man has a fuller idea of the real interest, or possible glory of his country than before, or a stronger impression from it, or a warmer concern for it, I give up to the critic any further reputation.

We have many copies and translations that pass for originals. This Ode, I humbly conceive, is an original, though it professes imitation. No man can be like Pindar, by imitating any of his particular works, any more than like Raphael, by copying the Cartoons. The genius and spirit of such great men must be collected from the whole; and when thus we are possessed of it, we must exert its energy in subjects and designs of our own.

Nothing is so unpindarical as following Pindar on the foot. Pindar is an original; and he must be so too who would be like Pindar in that which is his greatest praise. Nothing so unlike as a close copy and a noble original.

As for length, Pindar has an unbroken ode of six hundred lines. Nothing is long or short in writing, but relatively to the demand of the subject, and the manner of treating it. A distich may be long, and a folio short. However, I have broken this Ode into strains, each of which may be considered as a separate ode, if you please. And if the variety and fulness of matter be considered, I am rather apprehensive of danger from brevity in this Ode, than from length. But lank writing is what I think ought most to be declined, if for nothing else, for our plenty of it.

The Ode is the most spirited kind of poetry, and the Pindaric is the most spirited kind of ode. This I speak at my own very great peril; but truth has an eternal title to our confession, though we are sure to suffer by it.

THE MERCHANT.

AN ODE.

ON THE BRITISH TRADE AND NAVIGATION.

To his Grace the Duke of Chandos.

PRELUDE.

CONTENTS.

The Proposition. An Address to the Vessel that brought over the King. Who should sing on this occasion. Pindaric boast.

FAST by the surge my limbs are spread,
The naval oak nods o'er my head,
The winds are loud, the waves tumultuous roll;
Ye winds! indulge your rage no more;
Ye sounding billows! cease to roar:
The god descends, and transports warm my soul.

The waves are hushed, the winds are spent;
This kingdom, from the kingdoms rent,
I celebrate in song. Famed Isle! no less,
By Nature's favour, from mankind,
Than by the foaming sea disjoined;
Alone in bliss: an isle in happiness!

Though Fate and Time have damped my strains,
Though youth no longer fires my veins,
Though slow their streams in this cold climate run,
The royal eye dispels my cares,
Recalls the warmth of blooming years;
Returning George supplies the distant sun.

Away, my Soul! salute the Pine,*
That glads the heart of Caroline,
Its grand deposit faithful to restore!
Salute the bark that ne'er shall hold
So rich a freight in gems or gold,
And loaded from both Indies would be poor.

My soul! to thee she spreads her sails!
Their bosoms fill with sacred gales;
With inspiration from the Godhead warm;
Now bound for an eternal clime,
O send her down the tide of Time,
Snatched from oblivion, and secure from storm

Or teach this flag like that to soar,
Which gods of old and heroes bore;
Bid her a British constellation rise—
The sea she scorns; and now shall bound
On lofty billows of sweet sound:
I am her pilot, and her port the skies!

Dare you to sing, ye tinkling Train!
Silence, ye Wretched! ye Profane!
Who shackle prose, and boast of absent gods;
Who murder thought, and numbers maim,
Who write Pindarics cold and lame,
And labour stiff Anacreontic odes.

Ye lawful sons of Genius, rise!
Of genuine title to the skies;
Ye founts of learning! and ye mints of Fame!
You who file off the mortal part
Of glowing thought with Atticart,
And drink pure song from Cam's or Isis' stream.

I glow, I burn! the numbers pure,
High-flavoured, delicate, mature,
Spontaneous stream from my unlaboured breast;
As when full-ripened teems the vine,
The generous bursts of willing wine
Distil nectareous from the grape unpressed.

STRAIN I.

CONTENTS.

How the King attended. A prospect of happiness. Industry. A surprising instance of it in Old Rome. The mischief of sloth. What happiness is. Sloth its greatest enemy. Trade natural to Britain. Trade invoked. Described What the greatest human excellence. The praise of wealth. Its use, abuse, end. The variety of Nature. The final moral cause of it. The benefit of man's necessities. Britain's naval stores. She makes all nature serviceable to her ends. Of reason. Its excellence. How we should form our estimate of things. Reason's difficult task. Why the first glory her's. Her effects in Old Britain.

"OUR monarch comes! nor comes alone."
What shining forms surround his throne,
O sun! as planets thee. To my loud strain
See Peace, by Wisdom led, advance;
The Grace, the Muse, the Season, dance!
And Plenty spreads behind her flowing train!

* The vessel in which the King came over.

"Our monarch comes! nor comes alone!"
New glories kindle round his throne.
The visions rise! I triumph as I gaze.
By Pindar led, I turned of late
The volume dark, the folds of Fate,
And now am present to the future blaze.

By George and Jove it is decreed,
The mighthy Months in pomp proceed,
Fair daughters of the Sun!—O thou divine,
Blessed Industry! a smiling earth
From thee alone derives its birth:
By thee the ploughshare and its master shine.

From thee, mast, cable, anchor, oar,
From thee the cannon, and his roar!
On oaks nursed, reared by thee, wealth, empire grows.
O golden fruit! oak well might prove
The sacred tree, the tree of Jove;
All Jove can give the naval oak bestows.

What can not Industry complete?
When punic war first flamed, the great,
Bold, active, ardent Roman Fathers meet:
"Fell all your groves," a Flamen cries;*
As soon they fall, as soon they rise;
One moon a forest, and the next a fleet.

Is sloth indulgence? 'tis a toil;
Enervates man, and damns the soil;
Defeats creation, plunges in distress,
Cankers our being; all devours;
A full exertion of our powers!
Thence, and thence only, glows our happiness.

The stream may stagnate, yet be clear,
The sun suspend his swift career,
Yet healthy Nature feel her wonted force;
Ere man his active springs resigned,
Can rust in body and in mind,
Yet taste of bliss, of which he chokes the source.

Where, Industry! thy daughter fair?
Recall her to her native air:
Here was Trade born, here bred, here flourished long;
And ever shall she flourish here:
What though she languished? 'twas but fear;
She's sound of heart; her constitution's strong.

Wake, sting her up. Trade! lean no more
On thy fixed anchor; push from shore;
Earth nes before thee, every climate court.
And see! she's roused; absolved from fears,
Her brow in cloudless azure rears,
Spreads all her sail, and opens every port.

See cherished by her sister, Peace,
She levies gain on every place,
Religion, habit, custom, tongue, and name!
Again she travels with the sun,
Again she draws the golden zone,
Round earth and main; bright zone of wealth and fame.

Ten thousand active hands, that hung
In shameful sloth, with nerves unstrung,
The nation's languid load, defy the storms,
The sheets unfurl, and anchors weigh,
The long moored vessel wings to sea.
Worlds worlds salute, and peopled ocean swarms.

His sons, Po, Ganges, Danube, Nile,
Their sedgy foreheads lift and smile;
Their urns inverted, prodigally pour
Streams charged with wealth, and vow to buy
Britannia for their great ally,
With climes paid down. What can the gods do more?

Cold Russia costly furs, from far,
Hot China sends her painted jar,
France generous wines to crown it, Arab sweet,
With gales of incense swells our sails,
Nor distant Ind our merchant fails.
Her richest ore the ballast of our fleet.

Luxuriant isle! what tide that flows,
Or stream that glides, or wind that blows,
Or genial sun that shines, or shower that pours,
But flows, glides, breathes, shines, pours, for thee?
How every heart dilates to see
Each land's each season blending on thy shores!

All these one British harvest make?
The servant Ocean, for thy sake,
Both sinks and swells; his arms thy bosom wrap,
And fondly give, in boundless dower,
To mighty George's growing power,
The wafted world into thy loaded lap.

Commerce brings riches, riches crown
Fair virtue with the first renown;
A large revenue, and a large expense,
When hearts for others' welfare glow,
And spend as free as gods bestow,
Gives the full bloom to mortal excellence.

Glow, then, my breast! abound, my store;
This, and this boldly, I implore:
Their want and apathy let Stoics boast;
Passion and riches, good or ill,
As used by man demand our skill;
All blessings wound us when discretion's lost.

Wealth, in the virtuous and the wise,
'Tis vice and folly to despise:
Let those in praise of poverty refine,
Whose heads or hearts pervert its use,
The narrow souled or the profuse!
The truly great find morals in the mine.

* L. Florus.

Happy the man! who, large of heart,
Has learnt the rare, illustrious art
Of being rich: stores starve us, or they cloy,
From gold if more than chymic skill
Extract not what is brighter still:
'Tis hard to gain, much harder to enjoy.

Plenty's a means, and joy her end:
Exalted minds their joys extend.
A Chandos shines when others' joys are done;
As lofty turrets, by their height,
When humbler scenes resign their light,
Retain the rays of the declining sun.

Pregnant with blessings, Britain! swear,
No sordid son of thine shall dare
Offend the donor of thy wealth and peace;
Who now his whole creation drains
To pour into thy tumid veins
That blood of nations, commerce and increase.

How various Nature! turgid grain
Here nodding, floats the golden plain;
There worms weave silken webs, here glowing vines
Lay forth their purple to the sun:
Beneath the soil there harvests run,
And king's revenues ripen in the mines.

What's various Nature? art divine,
Man's soul to soften and refine;
Heaven different growths to different lands imparts,
That all may stand in need of all,
And interest draw around the ball
A net to catch and join all human hearts.

Thus has the great Creator's pen,
His law supreme to mortal men,
In their necessities distinctly writ;
E'en appetite supplies the place
Of absent virtue, absent grace,
And human want performs for human wit.

Vast naval ensigns strowed around,
The wondering foreigner confound;
How stands the deep-awed continent aghast,
As her proud sceptred sons survey,
At every port, on every quay,
Huge mountains rise, of cable, anchor, mast!

The unwielded tun! the ponderous bale!
Each prince his own clime set to sale
Sees here, by subjects of a British king.
How earth's abridged! all nations range
A narrow-spot! our thronged Exchange,
And send the streams of plenty from their spring.

Nor earth alone, all nature bends
To aid in Britain's glorious ends.
Toils she in trade? or bleeds in honest wars?
Her keel each yielding sea inthrals,
Each willing wind her canvass calls;
Her pilot into service lists the stars.

In size confined, and humbly made,
What though we creep beneath the shade,
And seem as emmets on this point the ball?
Heaven lighted up the human soul,
Heaven bid its rays transpierce the whole,
And, giving godlike reason, gave us all.

Thou golden chain 'twixt God and men,
Blessed Reason! guide my life and pen;
All ills, like ghosts, fly trembling at thy light,
Who thee obeys reigns over all;
Smiles, though the stars around him fall;
A God is nought but reason infinite.

The man of reason is a god,
Who scorns to stoop to Fortune's nod;
Sole agent he beneath the shining sphere.
Others are passive, are impelled,
Are frightened, flattered, sunk, or swelled,
As Accident is pleased to domineer.

Our hopes and fears are much to blame;
Shall monarchs awe? or crowns inflame?
From gross mistake our idle tumult springs:
Those men the silly world disarm,
Elude the dart, dissolve the charm,
Who know the slender worth of men and things.

The present object, present day,
Are idle phantoms, and away:
What's lasting, only does exist. Know this,
Life, fame, friends, freedom, empire, all;
Peace, commerce, freedom, nobly fall,
To launch us on the flood of endless bliss.

How foreign these, though most in view!
Go, look your whole existence through,
Thence form your rule; thence fix your estimate;
For so the gods. But as the gains,
How great the toil? 'twill cost more pains
To vanquish folly than reduce a state.

Hence, Reason! the first palm is thine;
Old Britain learnt from thee to shine:
By thee, Trade's swarming throng, gay Freedom's smile,
Armies, in war of fatal frown,
Of Peace the pride, Arts flowing down,
Enrich, exalt, defend, instruct our isle.

STRAIN II.

CONTENTS.

Arts from commerce. Why Britain should pursue it. What wealth includes. An historical digression, which kind is most frequent in Pindar. The wealth and wonderful glory of Tyre. The approach of her ruin. The cause of it. Her crimes through all ranks and orders. Her miserable fall. The neighbouring kings' just reflection on it. An awful image of the Divine power and vengeance. From what Tyre fell, and how deep her calamity.

COMMERCE gives arts as well as gain;
By commerce wafted o'er the main,

They barbarous climes enlighten as they run;
Arts, the rich traffic of the soul!
May travel thus from pole to pole,
And gild the world with learning's brighter sun.

Commerce gives learning, virtue, gold!
Ply Commerce then ye Britons bold,
Inured to winds and seas! lest gods repent:
The gods that throned you in the wave,
And, as the trident's emblem, gave
A triple realm that awes the continent:

And awes with wealth: for wealth is power:
When Jove descends, a golden shower,
'Tis navies, armies, empire, all in one——
View, emulate, outshine old Tyre;
In scarlet robed, with gems on fire,
Her Merchants princes! every deck a throne!

She sat an empress! awed the flood!
Her stable column Ocean trod;
She called the nations, and she called the seas,
By both obeyed; the Syrian sings;
The Cyprian's art her viol strings;
Togarmah's steed along her valley neighs.

The fir of Senir makes her floor,
And Bashan's oak, transformed, her oar;
High Lebanon her mast; far Dedan warms
Her mantled host; Arabia feeds;
Her sail of purple Egypt spreads;
Arvad sends mariners; the Persian arms.

The world's last limit bounds her fame,
The Golden City was her name!
Those stars on earth, the topaz, onyx, blaze
Beneath her foot. Extent of coast,
And rich as Nile's let others boast,
Her's the far noblest harvest of the seas.

O merchant land! as Eden fair!
Ancient of empires! Nature's care!
The strength of Ocean! head of Plenty's springs!
The pride of isles, in wars revered!
Mother of crafts! loved! courted! feared!
Pilot of kingdoms! and support of kings!

Great mart of nations!—but she fell:
Her pampered sons revolt! rebel!
Against his favourite isle loud roars the Main!
The tempest howls, her sculptured dome
Soon the wolf's refuge, dragon's home!
The land one altar! a whole people slain!

The destined Day puts on her frown;
The sable Hour is coming down;
She's on her march from yon almighty throne:
The sword and storm are in her hand;
She trumpets shrill her dread command:
Dark be the light of earth, the boast unknown!

For, oh! her sins, as red as blood,
As crimson deep outcry the flood:

The Queen of Trade is bought, once wise and just;
How venal is her council's tongue:
How riot, violence, and wrong,
Turn gold to dross, her blossom into dust!

To things inglorious, far beneath
Those high-born souls they proudly breathe
Her sordid nobles sink! her mighty bow!
Is it for this the groves around
Return the tabret's sprightly sound?
Is it for this her great ones toss the brow?

What burning feuds 'twixt brothers reign?
To nuptials cold how glows the vein,
Confounding kindred, and misleading right?
The spurious lord it o'er the land,
Bold Blasphemy dares make a stand,
Assault the sky, and brandish all her might!

Tyre's artisan, sweet orator,
Her merchant, sage, big man of war,
Her judge, her prophet, nay, her hoary heads,
Whose brows with wisdom should be crowned,
Her very priests in guilt abound:
Hence the world's cedar all her honours sheds.

What dearth of truth, what thirst of gold!
Chiefs warm in peace, in battle cold!
What youth unlettered! base ones lifted high!
What public boasts! what private views!
What desert temples! crowded stews!
What women—practised but to roll an eye!

O! foul of heart, her fairest dames
Decline the sun's intruding beams,
To mad the midnight in their gloomy haunts.
Alas! there is who sees them there;
There is who flatters not the fair,
When cymbals tinkle, and the virgin chants.

He sees, and thunders!—Now in vain
The courser paws and foams the rein,
And chariots stream along the printed soil:
In vain her high presumptuous air,
In gorgeous vestments, rich and rare,
O'er her proud shoulder throws the poor man's toil

In robes or gems, her costly strain,
Green, scarlet, azure, shine in vain!
In vain their golden heads her turrets rear;
In vain high-flavoured, foreign fruits,
Sidonian oils, and Lydian lutes,
Glide o'er her tongue, and melt upon her ear.

In vain wine flows in various streams,
With helm and spear each pillar gleams;
Damascus, vain! unfolds the glossy store,
The golden wedge from Ophir's coasts,
From Arab incense, vain, she boasts;
Vain are her gods, and vainly men adore.

Bell falls! the mighty Nebo bends!
The nations hiss! her glory ends!

To ships, her confidence! she flies from foes;
Foes meet her there: the wind, the wave,
That once aid, strength, and grandeur gave,
Plunge her in seas from which her glory rose.

Her ivory deck, embroidered sail,
And mast of cedar, nought avail,
Or pilot learned! she sinks, nor sinks alone!
Her gods sink with her! to the sky,
Which never more shall meet her eye,
She sends her soul out in one dreadful groan.

What though so vast her naval might,
In her first dawned the British right,
All flags abased her sea-dominion greet.*
What though she longer warred than Troy?
At length her foes that isle destroy,
Whose conquest sailed as far as sailed her fleet.

The kings she clothed in purple, shake
Their awful brows: "O foul mistake!
O fatal pride!" they cry, "this, this is she
Who said—With my own art and arm
In the world's wealth I wrap me warm—
And swelled at heart vain empress of the sea!

"This, this is she who meanly soared:
Alas! how low to be adored,
And style herself a god!—Through stormy wars
This eagle-isle her thunder bore,
High-fed her young with human gore,
And would have built her nest among the stars.

"But ah, frail man! how impotent
To stand heaven's vengeance, or prevent!
To turn aside the great Creator's aim!
Shall island kings with him contend,
Who makes the poles beneath him bend,
And shall drink up the sea herself with flame?

"Earth, ether, empyreum, bow,
When from the brazen mountain's brow,
The God of battles takes his mighty bow:
Of wrath prepares to pour the flood,
Puts on his vesture dipped in blood,
And marches out to scourge the world below.

"Ah wretched isle, once called the great!
Ah wretched isle! and wise too late!
The vengeance of Jehovah is gone out;
Thy luxury, corruption, pride,
And, freedom lost, the realms deride;
Adored thee standing; o'er thy ruins shout:

"To scourge with war, or peace bestow,
Was thine, O fallen! fallen low!
'Twas thine of jarring thrones to still debate:
How art thou fallen, down, down, down!
Wide Waste, and Night, and Horror frown,
Where Empire flamed in gold, and balanced states."

* Q. Curtia.

STRAIN III.

CONTENTS.

An inference from this history. Advice to Britain. More proper to her than other nations. How far the stroke of tyranny reaches. What supports our endeavours. The unconsidered benefits of liberty. Britain's obligation to pursue trade. Why above half the globe is sea. Britain's grandeur from her situation. The winds, the seas, the constellations, described. Sir Isaac Newton's praise. Britain compared with other states. The leviathan described. Britain's site and ancient title to the seas. Who rivals her. Of Venice. Holland. Some despise trade as mean; censured for it. Trade's glory. The late Czar. Solomon. A surprising instance of magnificence. The merchant's dignity. Compared with men of letters.

HENCE learn, as hearts are foul or pure,
Our fortunes wither or endure:
Nations may thrive or perish by the wave.
What storms from Jove's unwilling frown,
A people's crimes solicit down!
Ocean 's the womb of riches and the grave.

This truth, O Britain! ponder well:
Virtues should rise as fortunes swell.
What is large property?—the sign of good,
Of worth superior: if 'tis less,
Another's treasure we possess,
And charge the gods with favours misbestowed.

This counsel suits Britannia's isle,
High-flushed with wealth and Freedom's smile:
To vassals prisoned in the continent,
Who starve at home on meagre toil,
And suck to death their mother soil,
'Twere useless caution, and a truth mispent.

Fell tyrants strike beyond the bone,
And wound the soul; bow genius down,
Lay virtue waste! For worth or arts who strain,
To throw them at a monster's foot?
'Tis property supports pursuit.
Freedom gives eloquence, and freedom gain.

She pours the thought, and forms the style;
She makes the blood and spirits boil:
I feel her now! and rouse, and rise, and rave
In Theban song. O Muse! not thine,
Verse is gay Freedom's gift divine;
The man that can think greatly is no slave.

Others may traffic if they please;
Britain, fair daughter of the seas,
Is born for trade, to plough her field, the wave,
And reap the growth of every coast:
A speck of land! but let her boast
Gods gave the world, when they the waters gave

Britain! behold the world's wide face;
Nor covered half with solid space,
Three parts are fluid. Empire of the sea!

And why? for commerce. Ocean streams
For that, through all his various names;
And if for commerce, Ocean flows for thee.

Britain, like some great potentate
Of Eastern clime, retires in state,
Shuts out the nations! Would a prince draw nigh?
He passes her strong guards, the waves,
Of servant winds admission craves,
Her empire has no neighbour but the sky.

There are her friends; soft Zephyr there,
Keen Eurus, Notus never fair,
Rough Boreas bursting from the pole; all urge,
And urge for her, their various toil;
The Caspian, the broad Baltic boil,
And into life the dead Pacific scourge.

There are her friends, a marshalled train!
A golden host! and azure plain!
By turns do duty, and by turns retreat;
They may retreat, but not from her;
The stars that quit this hemisphere,
Must quit the skies to want a British fleet.

Hyad, for her, leans o'er her urn;
For her Orion's glories burn,
The Pleiads gleam. For Britons set and rise
The fair faced sons of Mazaroth,
Near the deep chambers of the South,
The raging dog that fires the midnight skies.

These nations Newton made his own;
All intimate with him alone,
His mighty soul did, like a giant, run
To the vast volume's closing star;
Deciphered every character:
His reason poured new light upon the sun.

Let the proud brothers of the land
Smile at our rock and barren strand;
Not such the sea; let Fohe's ancient line
Vast tracks and ample beings vaunt!
The camel low, small elephant;
O Britain! the leviathan is thine.

Leviathan! whom Nature's strife
Brought forth her largest piece of life!
He sleeps an isle! his sports the billows warm!
Dreadful Leviathan! thy spout
Invades the skies; the stars are out:
He drinks a river, and ejects a storm.

The Atlantic surge around our shore,
German and Caledonian roar;
Their mighty Genii hold us in their lap.—
Hear Egbert Edgar, Ethelred;
"The seas are ours,"—the monarchs said—
The floods their hands, their hands the nations clap

Whence is a rival then to rise?
Can he be found beneath the skies?
No, there they dwell that can give Britain fear:
The powers of earth, by rival aim,
Her grandeur but the more proclaim,
And prove their distance most as they draw near.

Proud Venice sits amid the waves,
Her foot ambitious Ocean laves;
Art's noblest boast! but, O! what wondrous odds
'Twixt Venice and Britannia's isle?
'Twixt mortal and immortal toil?
Britannia is a Venice built by gods.

Let Holland triumph o'er her foes,
But not o'er friends by whom she rose;
The child of Britain! and shall she contend?
It were no less than parricide——
What wonders rise from out the tide!
Her High and Mighty to the rudder bend.

And are there, then, of lofty brow,
Who think trade mean, and scorn to bow
So far beneath the state of noble birth?
Alas! these chiefs but little know
Commerce how high, themselves how low,
The sons of nobles are the sons of earth.

And what have earth's mean sons to do
But reap her fruits, and warm pursue
The world's chief good, not glut on others' toil?
High Commerce from the gods came down,
With compass, chart, and starry crown,
Their delegate to make the nations smile.

Blush, and behold the Russian bow;
From forty crowns his mighty brow
To trade—to toil he turns his glorious hand;
That arm which swept the bloody field,
See! the huge axe or hammer wield,
While sceptres wait, and thrones impatient stand.

O shame to subjects! first renown,
Matchless example to the crown!
Old Time is poor; what age boasts such a sight
He drones! adore the man divine—
No; virtue still as mean decline;
Call Russians barb'rous and yourselves polite.

He, too, of Judah, great as wise,
With Hiram strove in merchandise;
Monarchs with monarchs struggle for an oar!
That Merchant sinking to his grave,
A flood of treasure swells the cave;
The king left much, the merchant buried more.*

* Vast treasure taken from Solomon's tomb thirteen hundred years after his death, three thousand talents at one time, and an immense sum the next.

Is Merchant an inglorious name?
No; fit for Pindar such a theme,
Too great for me; I pant beneath the weight!
If loud as Ocean's were my voice,
If words and thoughts to court my choice
Outnumbered sands, I could not reach its height.

Merchants o'er proudest heroes reign;
Those trade in blessing, these in pain,
At slaughter swell, and shout while nations groan:
With purple monarchs merchants vie:
If great to spend, what to supply?
Priests pray for blessings, merchants pour 'em down.

Kings Merchants are, in league, and love,
Earth's odours pay soft airs above,
That o'er the teeming field prolific range.
Planets are Merchants, take, return,
Lustre and heat; by traffic burn:
The whole creation is one vast Exchange.

Is Merchant an inglorious name?
What say the sons of lettered Fame,
Proud of their volumes, swelling in their cells?
In open life, in change of scene,
'Mid various manners, throngs of men,
Experience, arts, and solid wisdom dwells.

Trade, Art's mechanic, Nature's stores
Well weighs; to starry science soars:
Reads warm in life (dead-coloured by the pen)
The sites, tongues, interests, of the ball:
Who studies trade, he studies all.
Accomplished Merchants are accomplished men.

STRAIN IV.

CONTENTS.

Pindar invoked. His praise. Britain should decline war, but boldly assert her trade. Encouraged from the throne. Britain's condition without trade. Trade's character, and surprising deeds. Carthage. Solomon's temple. St. Paul's Church. The miser's character. The wonderful effects of trade. Why religion recommended to the Merchant. What false joy. What true. What religion is to the Merchant. Why trade more glorious in Britons than others. How warmly and how long to be pursued by us. The Briton's legacy. Columbus. His praise. America described. Worlds still unknown. Queen Elizabeth. King George II. His glory navally represented.

How shall I farther rouse the soul!
How Sloth's lascivious reign control
By verse with unextinguished ardour wrought?
How every breast inflame with mine?
How bid my theme still brighter shine,
With wealth of words and unexhausted thought?

O thou Dircæan swan on high,
Round whom familiar thunders fly!
While Jove attends a language like his own,
Thy spirit pour like vernal showers;
My verse shall burst out with the flowers,
While Britain's trade advances with her sun

Though Britain was not born to fear,
Grasp not at bloody fame for war;
Nor war decline, if thrones your right invade:
Jove gathers tempest black as night;
Jove pours the golden flood of light:
Let Britain thunder, or let Britain trade.

Britain, a comet or a star,
In commerce this, or that in war;
Let Britons shout! earth, seas, and skies resound!
Commerce to kindle, raise, preserve,
And spirit dart througn every nerve,
Hear from the throne* a voice through time renowned.

So fall from heaven the vernal showers,
To cheer the glebe, and wake the flowers:
The bloom called forth, sees azure skies displayed.
The bird of voice is proud to sing,
Industrious bees ply every wing,
Distend their cells, and urge their golden trade.

Trade once extinguished, Britain's sun
Is gone out too; his race is run;
He shines in vain; her isle 's an isle indeed,
A spot too small to be o'ercome:
Ah, dreadful safety! wretched doom!
No foe will conquer what no foe can feed.

Trade 's the source, sinew, soul of all:
Trade 's all herself: her's, her's the ball:
Where most unseen, the goddess still is there.
Trade leads the dance, Trade lights the blaze,
The courtier's pomp! the student's ease!
'Twas Trade at Blenheim fought, and closed the war.

What Rome and all her gods defies?
The Punic oar; behold it rise
And battle for the world! Trade gave the call:
Rich cordials from his naval art
Sent the strong spirits to his heart,
That bid an Afric Merchant grasp the ball.

Where is, on earth, Jevovah's home?
Trade marked the soil, and built the dome,
In which his majesty first deigned to dwell;
The walls with silver sheets o'erlaid,
Rich as the sun, through gold unweighed,
Bent the mooned arch, and bid the column swell.

Grandeur unknown to Solomon!†
Methinks the lab'ring earth should groan
Beneath yon load; created, sure, not made!

* The King's Speech.
† St. Paul's built by the coal-tax.

Servant and rival of the skies!
Heaven's arch alone can higher rise;
What hand immortal raised thee?—Humble Trade.

Where had'st thou been if left at large,
Those sinewy arms that tugged the barge
Had caught at Pleasure on the flowery green?
If they that watched the midnight star
Had swung behind the rolling car,
Or filled it with disgrace, where had'st thou been?

As by repletion men consume,
Abundance is the miser's doom.
Expend it nobly; he that lets it rust,
Which, passing numerous hands, would shine;
Is not a man, but living mine,
Foe to the gods, and rival to the dust.

Trade barbarous lands can polish fair,
Make earth well worth the wise man's care,
Call forth her forests, charm them into fleets:
Can make one house of human race,
Can bid the distant poles embrace;
Her's every sun; and India India meets.

Trade monarchs crown, and arts imports,
With bounty feeds with laurel courts;
Trade gives fair Virtue fairer still to shine,
Enacts those guards of gain, the laws,
Exalts e'en Freedom's glorious cause:
Trade, warned by Tyre, O make religion thine!

You lend each other mutual aid:
Why is heaven's smile in wealth conveyed?
Not to place vice, but virtues, in our power.
Pleasure declined is luxury,
Boundless in time and in degree;
Pleasure enjoyed, the tumult of an hour.

False joy 's a discomposing thing,
That jars on Nature's trembling string,
Tempests the spirits, and untunes the frame:
True joy the sunshine of the soul,
A bright serene that calms the whole,
Which they ne'er knew whom other joys inflame.

Merchant! religion is the care
To grow as rich—as angels are;
To know false coin from true; to sweep the main,
The mighty stake secure, beyond
The strongest tie of field or fund:
Commerce gives gold, religion makes it gain.

Join then religion to thy store,
Or India's mines will make thee poor.
Greater than Tyre! O bear a nobler mind,
Sea sovereign isle! proud War decline,
Trade patronize! What glory thine,
Ardent to bless, who could subdue mankind?

Rich Commerce ply, with warmth divine,
By day, by night; the stars are thine·
Wear out the stars in trade! eternal run
From age to age, the noble glow,
A rage to gain and to bestow:
While ages last! in trade burn out the sun.

Trade, Britain's all, our sires sent down,
With toil, blood, treasure, ages won:
This Edgar great bequeathed; this Edward bold,
Let Forbisher's, let Raleigh's fire!
O let Columbus' shade inspire!
New worlds disclose, with Drake surround an old.

Columbus! scare inferior fame
For thee to find, than heaven to frame,
That womb of gold and gem:* her wide domain
An universe! her rivers seas!
Her fruits, both men and gods to please!
Heaven's fairest birth! and but for thee in vain.

Worlds still unknown deep shadows wrap;
Call wonders forth from Nature's lap;
New glory pour on her eternal sire:
O noble search! O glorious care!
Are you not Britons? why despair?
New worlds are due to such a godlike sire.

Swear by the great Eliza's soul,
That trade as long as waters roll:
Ah! no; the gods chastise my rash decree:
By great Eliza do not swear;
For thee, O George! the gods declare,
And thou for them! late time shall swear by thee.

Truth, bright as stars, with thee prevails;
Full be thy fame as swelling sails;
Constant as tides, thy mind; as masts elate;
Thy justice an unerring helm,
To steer Britannia's fickle realm;
Thy numerous race sure anchor of her state.

STRAIN V.

CONTENTS.

What is the bound of Britain's power. Beyond that of the most famed in history. The sign Lyra. What the constellations are. Argo. The Whale. The Dolphin. Eridanus. The Lion. Libra. Virgo. Berenice. The British lady censured. The Moon. What the sea is. Apostrophe to the Emperor. The Spanish Armada. How Britain should speak her resentment. What gives power. What natives do in war. The Tartar. Mogul. Africa. China. Who master of the world. What the history of the world is. The genealogy of Glory. Mistakes about it. Peace the Merchant's harvest. Ships of divine origin. Merchants ambassadors. The Briton's voyage. Praise the food of Glory. Britain's record.

Britannia's state what bounds confine!
(Of rising thought! O golden mine!)
Mountains, Alps, streams, gulfs, oceans, set no bound;
She sallies till she strikes the star;
Expanding wide, and launching far
As wind can fly, or rolling wave resound.

* Vide Descriptions of America.

Small isle! for Cæsars, for the son
Of Jove, who burst from Macedon,
For gorgeous Easterns blazing o'er mankind,
Then, when they called the world their own,
Not equal fame from fable shown:
They rose to gods, in half thy sphere confined.

Here no demand for Fancy's wing;
Plain Truth's illustrious: as I sing,
Oh hear yon spangled harp repeat my lay!
Yon starry lyre has caught the sound,
And spreads it to the planets round,
Who best can tell where ends Britannia's sway.

The skies (fair printed page!) unfold
The naval fame of heroes old,
As in a mirror show the adventurous throng.
The deeds of Grecian mariners
Are read by gods, are writ in stars,
And noble verse that shall endure as long.

The skies are records of the main;
Thence Argo listens to my strain:
Chiron for song renowned, his noble rage
For naval fame and song renews,
As Britain's fame he hears and views;
Chiron, the Shovel of a former age.

The Whale (for late I sung his praise)
Pours grateful lustre on my lays.
How smiles Arion's* friend with partial beams?
Eridanus would flatter too,
But jealousies his smiles subdue;
He fears a British rival in the Thames.

In pride the lion lifts his mane,
To see his British brothers reign
As stars below; the Balance, George! from thine,
Which weighs the nations, learns to weigh
More accurate the night and day;
From thy fair daughters Virgo learns to shine.

Of Britain's courts, ye lesser lights!
How could the wise men gaze whole nights
On Richmond's eye, on Berenice's air?
But, oh! you practise shameful arts:
Your own retain, seize others' hearts;
Pirates, not merchants, are the British fair.

'Tis truth I sing by Cynthia's beam,
Pale Queen! be flushed at Britain's fame;
And, rolling, tell the nations,—o'er the main
"To share her empire is thy pride."
He, mighty Power! who curbs the tide,
Uncurbs, extends, throws wide Britannia's reign.

What is the main, ye kings renowned!
Britannia's centre and your bound?
Austrian! where'er Leviathan can roll
Is Britain's home! and Britain's mine
Where'er the ripening sun can shine!
Parts are for emperors; for her the whole.

Why, Austrian! wilt thou hover still
On doubtful wing, and want the skill
To see thy welfare in the world's? too late
Another Churchill thou may'st find,
Another Churchill not so kind,
And other Blenheims big with other fate.

Ill thou remember'st ill, dost own
Who rescued an ungrateful throne;
Ill thou consider'st that the kind are brave;
Ill thou dost weigh that in Time's womb
A day may sleep, a day of doom,
As great to ruin as was that to save.

How would'st thou smile to hear my strain,
Whose boasted inspiration's vain?
Yet what if my prediction should prove true?
Know'st thou the fatal pair who shine
O'er Britain's trading empire! thine
As one rejected, what if one subdue?

What naval scene* adorns the seat
Of awful Britain's high debate,
Inspires her councils, and records her power?
The nations know, in glowing balls
On sinking thrones the tempest falls
When her august assembled senates lower.

O language, fit for thought so bold!
Would Britain have her anger told?
Ah! never let a meaner language sound,
Than that which prostrates human souls,
Through heaven's dark vault impetuous rolls,
And Nature rocks when angry Jove has frowned.

Nor realms unbounded, not a flood
Of natives, not expense of blood,
Or reach of council, gives the world a lord;
Trade calls him forth, and sets him high,
As mortal man o'er men can fly.
Trade leaves poor gleanings to the keenest sword.

Nay, hers the sword, for fleets have wings,
Like lightning fly to distant kings:
Like gods descend at once on trembling states.
Is war proclaimed? Our wars are hurled
To farthest confines of the world,
Surprise your ports, and thunder at your gates.

The King of tempests, Æolus,
Sends forth his pinioned people thus,
On rapid errands, as they fly they roar,
And carry sable clouds, and sweep
The land, the desert, and the deep!
Earth shakes! proud cities fall, and thrones adore!

The fools of Nature ever strike
On bare outsides, and loathe, or like
As glitter bids: in endless error vie;
Admire the purple and the crown;
Of human welfare and renown
Trade's the big heart; bright empire but their eye.

* The Dolphin.

* The Spanish Armada, in the House of Lords

Whence Tartar grand, or Mogul great?
Trade gilt their titles, powered their state;
While Afric's black, lascivious, slothful breed,
To clasp their ruin, fly from toil,
That meanest product of their soil.
Their people sell; one half on the' other feed.

Of Nature's wealth, from commerce rent,
Afric's a glaring monument:
Mid citron forests, and pomegranate groves,
(Cursed in a paradise!) she pines;
O'er generous glebes, o'er golden mines,
Her beggared, famished, tradeless native roves.

Not so thine, China! blooming wide,
Thy numerous fleets might bridge the tide;
Thy products would exhaust both Indias' mines,
Shut be that gate of trade! or wo
To Britains! Europe 'twill o'erflow.
Ungrateful song! her growth* inspires thy lines.

Britain! to these, and such as these,
The river broad, and foaming seas,
Which sever lands to mortals less renowned,
Devoid of naval skill or might:
Those severed parts of earth unite:
Trade's the full pulse that sends their vigour round.

Could, O could one engrossing hand
The various streams of trade command?
That, like the sun, would gazing nations awe;
That awful power the world would brave,
Bold War, and Empire proud, his slave:
Mankind his subjects, and his will their law.

Hast thou looked round the spacious earth?
From commerce, Grandeur's humble birth;
To George from Noah, Empires living, dead,
Their pride, their shame, their rise, their fall,
Time's whole plain chronicle is all
One bright encomium, undesigned, on trade.

Trade springs from peace, and wealth from trade,
And power from wealth: of power is made
The god on earth; hail, then, the dove of peace!
Whose olive speaks the raging flood
Of War repressed; what's loss of blood?
War is the death of Commerce and Increase.

Then perish War—detested War!
Shalt thou make gods, like Cæsar's star?
What calls man fool so loud as this has done,
From Nimrod's down to Bourbon's line?
Why not adore, too, as divine,
Wide wasting storms before the genial sun?

Peace is the merchant's summer clear;
His harvest—harvest round the year!
For Peace with laurel every mast be bound;
Each deck carouse, each flag stream out,
Each cannon sound, each sailor shout;
For peace, let every sacred ship be crowned!

Sacred are ships, of birth divine!
An angel drew the first design;
With which the Patriarch* Nature's ruin braved:
Two world's abroad, an old and new,
He safe o'er foaming billows flew,
The gods made human race, a pilot saved.

How sacred, too, the Merchant's name!—
When Britain blazed meridian fame,†
Bright shone the sword, but brighter trade gave law;
Merchants in distant courts revered,
Where prouder statesmen ne'er appeared,
Merchants ambassadors! and thrones in awe:

'Tis theirs to know the tides, the times,
The march of stars, the birth of climes:
Summer and winter theirs; theirs land and sea:
Theirs are the seasons, months and years,
And each a different garland wears:
O that my song could add eternity!

Praise is the sacred oil that feeds
The burning lamp of godlike deeds:
Immortal glory pays illustrious cares.
Whither, ye Britons! are ye bound?
O noble voyage, glorious round!
Launch from the Thames, and end among the stars.

If to my subject rose my soul,
Your fame should last while oceans roll:
When other worlds in depths of time shall rise,
As we the Greeks of mighty name,
May they Britannia's fleet proclaim,
Look up and read her stories in the skies.‡

Ye Syrens! sing; ye Tritons! blow;
Ye Nereids! dance; ye Billows! flow;
Roll to my measures O ye starry throng!
Ye Winds! in concert breathe around;
Ye Navies! to the concert bound
From pole to pole! to Britain all belong.

THE MORAL.

CONTENTS.

The most happy should be the most virtuous. Of eternity What Britain's art should be. Whence slavery.

BRITAIN! thus blessed, thy blessing know,
Or bliss in vain the gods bestow;

* Coffee.

* Noah. † In Queen Elizabeth's reign.

‡ It is Sir Isaac Newton's opinion that the principal constellations took their names from the Argonauts, to perpetuate that great action.

Its end fulfil, means cherish, source adore:
Vain swellings of thy soul repress;
They most may lose who most possess.
Then let us bless with awe, and tremble at thy store.

Nor be too fond of life at best;
Her cheerful, not enamoured guest:
Let thought fly forward; 'twill gay prospects give,
Prospects immortal! that deride
A Tyrian wealth, a Persian pride,
And make it perfect fortitude to live.

O for eternity! a scene
To fair adventurers serene!
O, on that sea to deal in pure renown!
Traffic with gods! what transports roll!
What boundless import to the soul!
The poor man's empire! and the subject's crown!

Adore the gods, and plough the seas:
These be thy arts, O Britain! these.
Let others pant for an immense command;
Let others breathe War's fiery god:
The proudest victor fears thy nod,
Long as the trident fills thy glorious hand.

Glorious while heaven-born freedom lasts,
Which Trade's soft spurious daughter blasts:
For what is tyranny? a monstrous birth
From luxury, by bribes caressed,
By glowing power in shades compressed,
Which stalks around, and chains the groaning earth.

THE CLOSE.

CONTENTS.

This subject now first sung. How sung. Preferable to Pindar's subject. How Britain should be sung by all.

Thee, Trade! I first, who boast no store,
Who owe thee nought, thus snatch from shore,
The shore of prose, where thou hast slumbered long,
And send thy flag triumphant down
The tide of time to sure renown:
O bless my country! and thou payest my song.

Thou art the Briton's noblest theme:
Why then unsung? my simple aim
To dress plain sense, and fire the generous blood,
Nor sport imaginations vain;
But list with yon ethereal train*
The shining muse, to serve the public good.

* The Stars.

Of ancient art, and ancient praise,
The springs are opened in my lays:*
Olympic heroes' ghosts around me throng,
And think their glory sung anew,
Till chiefs of equal fame they view,
Nor grudge to Britons bold their Theban song.

Not Pindar's theme with mine compares;
As far surpassed as useful cares
Transcend diversion light, and glory vain:
The wreath fantastic, shouting throng,
And panting steed to him belong;
The charioteer's, not empire's golden rein.

Nor, Chandos! thou the Muse despise
That would to glowing Ætna rise,
(Such Pindar's breast) thou Theron of our time,
Seldom to man the gods impart
A Pindar's head or Theron's heart.
In life or song how rare the true sublime!

None British born will sure disdain
This new, bold, moral, patriot strain,
Though not with genius, with some virtue crowned;
(How vain the muse!) the lay may last,
Thus twined around the British mast,
The British mast with nobler laurels bound!

Weak ivy curls round naval oak,
And smiles at winds and storms unbroke;
By strength not her's sublime: thus proud to soar
To Britain's grandeur cleaves my strain,
And lives and echoes through the plain,
While o'er the billows Britain's thunders roar.

Be dumb, ye groveling sons of verse,
Who sing not actions, but rehearse,
And fool the muse with impotent desire;
Ye sacrilegious! who presume
To tarnish Britain's naval bloom,
Sing Britain's fame, with all her hero's fire.

CHORUS.

Ye Syrens, sing; ye Tritons, blow;
Ye Nereids, dance; ye billows, flow;
Roll to my measures, O ye starry throng!
Ye winds, in concert breathe around;
Ye navies, to the concert bound
From pole to pole; to Britain all belong:
Britain to heaven: from heaven descends my song.

* ———Tibi res antiquæ laudis, et artis
Ingredior, sanctos ausus recludere fontes;
Asæumque cano Romana per oppida carmen.—*Virg*

A Paraphrase

ON PART OF THE BOOK OF JOB.*

THRICE happy Job† long lived in regal state,
Nor saw the sumptuous East a prince so great;
Whose worldly stores in such abundance flowed,
Whose heart with such exalted virtue glowed.
At length misfortunes take their turn to reign,
And ills on ills succeed, a dreadful train!
What now but deaths, and poverty, and wrong,
The sword wide-wasting, the reproachful tongue,
And spotted plagues, that marked his limbs all o'er
So thick with pains, they wanted room for more?
A change so sad what mortal heart could bear?
Exhausted wo had left him nought to fear,
But gave him all to grief. Low earth he pressed,
Wept in the dust, and sorely smote his breast.
His friends around the deep affliction mourned,
Felt all his pangs, and groan for groan returned;
In anguish of their hearts their mantles rent,
And seven long days in solemn silence spent;
A debt of reverence to distress so great!
Then Job contained no more, but cursed his fate.
His day of birth, its inauspicious light,
He wishes sunk in shades of endless night,
And blotted from the year, nor fears to crave
Death, instant death, impatient for the grave,
That seat of peace, that mansion of repose,
Where rest and mortals are no longer foes;
Where counsellors are hushed, and mighty kings
(O happy turn!) no more are wretched things.
His words were daring, and displeased his friends;
His conduct they reprove, and he defends;
And now they kindled into warm debate,
And sentiments opposed with equal heat;
Fixed in opinoin, both refuse to yield,
And summon all their reason to the field:
So high, at length, their arguments were wrought,
They reached the last extent of human thought:
A pause ensued:—when Io, heaven interposed,
And awfully the long contention closed.
Full o'er their heads, with terrible surprise,
A sudden whirlwind blackened all the skies:
(They saw, and trembled!) from the darkness broke
A dreadful voice, and thus th' Almighty spoke.*
Who gives his tongue a loose so bold and vain,
Censures my conduct, and reproves my reign.
Lifts up his thought against me from the dust,
And tells the world's Creator what is just:
Of late so brave, now lift a dauntless eye,
Face my demand, and give it a reply—
Where didst thou dwell at Nature's early birth?
Who laid foundations for the spacious earth?
Who on its surface did extend the line,
Its form determine, and its bulk confine?
Who fixed the corner-stone? What hand, declare,
Hung it on nought, and fastened it on air,
When the bright morning stars in concert sung,
When heaven's high arch with loud hosannas rung,
When shouting sons of God the triumph crowned,
And the wide conclave thundered with the sound?
Earth's numerous kingdoms, hast thou viewed them all?
And can thy span of knowledge grasp the ball?
Who heaved the mountain which sublimely stands
And casts its shadow into distant lands?
Who, stretching forth his sceptre o'er the deep,
Can the wide world in due subjection keep?
I broke the globe, I scooped its hollow side,
And did a bason for the floods provide:
I chained them with my word: the boiling sea,
Worked up in tempests, hears my great decree;

* It is disputed among the critics, who was the author of the book of Job; some give it to Moses, some to others. As I was engaged in this little performance, some arguments occurred to me which favour the former of these opinions; arguments I have flung into the following notes, where little else is to be expected.

† The Almighty's speech, chap. xxxviii. &c. which is what I paraphrase in this little work, is by much the finest part of the noblest and most ancient poem in the world. Bishop Patrick says, its grandeur is as much above all other poetry, as thunder is louder than a whisper. In order to set this distinguished part of the poem in a fuller light, and give the reader a clearer conception of it, I have abridged the preceding and subsequent parts of the poem, and joined them to it; so that this book is a sort of an epitome of the whole book of Job.

I use the word *paraphrase*, because I want another which might better answer to the uncommon liberties I have taken. I have omitted, added, and transposed. The mountain, the comet, the sun, and other parts, are entirely added: those upon the peacock, the lion, &c. are much enlarged; and I have thrown the whole into a method more suitable to our notions of regularity. The judicious, if they compare this piece with the original, will, I flatter myself, find the reasons for the great liberties I have indulged myself in through the whole.

Longinus has a chapter on interrogations, which shows that they contribute very much to the sublime. This speech of the Almighty is made up of them. Interrogation seems, indeed, the proper style of majesty incensed. It differs from other manner of reproof as bidding a person execute himself does from a common execution; for he that asks the guilty a proper question makes him, in effect, pass sentence on himself.

* The book of Job is well known to be dramatic, and, like the tragedies of old Greece, is fiction built on truth. Probably this most noble part of it, the Almighty speaking out of the whirlwind (so suitable to the after-practice of the Greek stage, when there happened *dignus vindice nodus*) is fictitious; but it is a fiction more agreeable to the time in which Job lived than to any since. Frequent before the law were the appearances of the Almighty after this manner, Exod. ch. xix. Ezek. ch. i, &c. Hence is he said to *dwell in thick darkness, and have his way in the whirlwind*

"Thus far thy floating tide shall be conveyed;
And here, O Main! be thy proud billows stayed."*
Hast thou explored the secrets of the deep,
Where, shut from use, unnumbered treasures sleep?
Where, down a thousand fathoms from the day,
Springs the great fountain, mother of the sea?
Those gloomy paths did thy bold foot e'er tread,
Whole worlds of waters rolling o'er thy head.
Hath the cleft centre opened wide to thee?
Death's inmost chambers didst thou ever see?
E'er knock at his tremendous gate, and wade
To the black portal through the incumbent shade?
Deep are those shades; but shades still deeper hide
My counsels from the ken of human pride.
Where dwells the Light? in what refulgent dome?
And where has darkness made her dismal home?
Thou know'st, no doubt, since thy large heart is fraught
With ripened wisdom, through long ages brought,
Since Nature was called forth when thou wast by,
And into being rose beneath thine eye!
Are mists begotten? who their father knew?
From whom descend the pearly drops of dew?
To bind the stream by night what hand can boast?
Or whiten morning with the hoary frost?
Whose powerful breath, from northern regions blown,
Touches the sea, and turns it into stone?
A sudden desart spreads o'er realms defaced,
And lays one half of the creation waste?
Thou know'st me not; thy blindness can not see
How vast a distance parts thy God from thee.
Can'st thou in whirlwinds mount aloft? can'st thou
In clouds and darkness wrap thy awful brow!
And when day triumphs in meridian light,
Put forth thy hand and shade the world with night?
Who launched the clouds in air, and bid them roll
Suspended seas aloft, from pole to pole?
Who can refresh the burning sandy plain,
And quench the summer with a waste of rain?
Who in rough desarts, far from human toil,
Made rocks bring forth, and desolation smile?
There blooms the rose where human face ne'er shone,
And spreads its beauties to the sun alone.
To check the shower who lifts his hand on high,
And shuts the sluices of the' exhausted sky,
When earth no longer mourns her gaping veins,
Her naked mountains, and her russet plains,
But, new in life, a cheerful prospect yields
Of shining rivers, and of verdant fields;
When groves and forests lavish all their bloom,
And earth and heaven are filled with rich perfume?
Hast thou e'er scaled my wint'ry skies, and seen
Of hail and snows my northern magazine?
These the dread treasures of mine anger are,
My fund of vengeance for the day of war,
When clouds rain death, and storms, at my command,
Rage through the world, or waste a guilty land.
Who taught the rapid winds to fly so fast;
Or shakes the centre with his eastern blast?
Who from the skies can a whole deluge pour?
Who rides through nature with a solemn roar
Of dreadful thunder, points it where to fall,
And in fierce lightning wraps the flying ball?
Not he who trembles at the darted fires,
Falls at the sound, and in the flash expires.
Who drew the comet out to such a size,
And poured his flaming train o'er half the skies?
Did thy resentment hang him out? Does he
Glare on the nations, and denounce from thee?
Who on low earth can moderate the rein
That guides the stars along the ethereal plain?
Appoint their seasons, and direct their course,
Their lustre brighten, and supply their force?
Can'st thou the skies' benevolence restrain,
And cause the Pleiades to shine in vain?
Or, when Orion sparkles from his sphere,
Thaw the cold season, and unbind the year?
Bid Mazzaroth his destined station know,
And teach the bright Arcturus where to glow?
Mine is the Night, with all her stars; I pour
Myriads, and myriads I reserve in store.
Dost thou pronounce where Daylight shall be born,
And draw the purple curtains of the Morn?
Awake the Sun, and bid him come away,
And glad thy world with his obsequious ray?
Hast thou, enthroned in flaming glory, driven
Triumphant round the spacious ring of heaven?
That pomp of light, what hand so far displays,
That distant earth lies basking in the blaze?
Who did the soul with her rich powers invest,
And light up reason in the human breast,
To shine, with fresh increase of lustre, bright,
When stars and sun are set in endless night?
To these my various questions make reply.
The Almighty spoke, and, speaking, shook the sky.
What then, Chaldean Sire! was thy surprise?
Thus thou, with trembling heart, and downcast eyes:
"Once and again, which I in groans deplore,
My tongue has erred, but shall presume no more.

* There is a very great air in all that precedes, but this is signally sublime. We are struck with admiration to see the vast and ungovernable ocean receiving commands, and punctually obeying them; to find it like a managed horse, raging, tossing, and foaming, but by the rule and direction of its master. This passage yields in sublimity to that of *Let there be light, &c.* so much only, as the absolute government of nature yields to the creation of it.

The like spirit in these two passages is no bad concurrent argument that Moses is author of the book of Job.

My voice is in eternal silence bound,
And all my soul falls prostrate to the ground."
He ceased: when, lo! again the' Almighty spoke;
The same dread voice from the black whirlwind broke!
Can that arm measure with an arm divine?
And can'st thou thunder with a voice like mine?
Or in the hollow of thy hand contain
The bulk of waters, the wide-spreading main,
When, mad with tempests, all the billows rise
In all their rage, and dash the distant skies?
Come forth, in Beauty's excellence arrayed,
And be the grandeur of thy power displayed;
Put on omnipotence, and, frowning, make
The spacious round of the creation shake;
Despatch thy vengeance, bid it overthrow
Triumphant Vice, lay lofty tyrants low,
And crumble them to dust. When this is done,
I grant thy safety lodged in thee alone;
Of thee thou art, and may'st undaunted stand
Behind the buckler of thine own right hand.
Fond man! the vision of a moment made!
Dream of a dream! and shadow of a shade!
What worlds hast thou produced, what creatures framed,
What insects cherished, that thy God is blamed?
When, pained with hunger, the wild raven's brood
Loud calls on God,* importunate for food;
Who hears their cry, who grants their hoarse request,
And still the clamour of the craving nest?
Who in the stupid ostrich† has subdued
A parent's care, and fond inquietude?
While far she flies, her scattered eggs are found,
Without an owner on the sandy ground;
Cast out on fortune, they at mercy lie,
And borrow life from an indulgent sky:
Adopted by the Sun, in blaze of day,
They ripen under his prolific ray;
Unmindful she that some unhappy tread
May crush her young in their neglected bed:
What time she skims along the field with speed,*
She scorns the rider and pursuing steed.†
How rich the peacock!‡ what bright glories run
From plume to plume, and vary in the sun!
He proudly spreads them to the golden ray,
Gives all his colours, and adorns the day;
With conscious state the spacious round displays,
And slowly moves amid the waving blaze.
Who taught the hawk to find, in seasons wise,
Perpetual summer, and a change of skies?
When clouds deform the year, she mounts the wind,
Shoots to the south, nor fears the storm behind;
The sun returning, she returns again,
Lives in his beams, and leaves ill days to men.
Though strong the hawk, though practised well to fly,§
An eagle drops her in a lower sky:
An eagle, when, deserting human sight,
She seeks the sun in her unwearied flight:
Did thy command her yellow pinion lift
So high in air, and seat her on the clift,
Where far above thy world she dwells alone,
And proudly makes the strength of rocks her own;
Thence wide o'er nature takes her dread survey,
And with a glance predestinates her prey?‖
She feasts her young with blood, and, hovering o'er
The unslaughtered host, enjoys the promised gore.
Knowest thou how many moons, by me assigned,
Roll o'er the mountain goat and forest hind,¶

* Another argument that Moses was the author is, that most of the creatures here mentioned are Egyptian. The reason given why the raven is particularly mentioned as an object of the care of Providence is, because by her clamorous and importunate voice she particularly seems always calling upon it. And since there were ravens on the Nile more clamorous than the rest of that species, those probably are meant in this place.

† There are many instances of this bird's stupidity: let two suffice. First, it covers its head in the reeds, and thinks itself out of sight.

Secondly, They that go in the pursuit of them draw the skin of an ostrich's neck on one hand, which proves a sufficient lure to take them with the other.

They have so little brain, that Heliogabalus had six hundred heads for his supper.

Here we may see that our judicious as well as sublime author just touches the points of distinction in each creature, and then hastens to another. A description is exact when you can not add, but what is common to another thing; nor withdraw, but something peculiarly belonging to the thing described. A likeness is lost in too much description, as a meaning often in too much illustration.

* Here is marked another peculiar quality of this creature, which neither flies nor runs directly, but has a motion composed of both, and using its wings as sails, makes great speed.

† Xenophon says, Cyrus had horses that could overtake the goat and the wild ass, but none that could reach this creature. A thousand golden ducats, or an hundred camels, was the stated price of a horse that could equal their speed.

‡ Though this bird is but just mentioned in my author, I could not forbear going a little further, and spreading those beautiful plumes (which are shut up) into half a dozen lines. The circumstance I have marked of his opening his plumes to the sun is true: *Expandit colores adversa maxim sole, quia sic fulgentius radiant.* Plin. lx. c. 20.

§ Thuanus (*De re Accip.*) mentions a hawk that flew from Paris to London in a night.

And the Egyptians, in regard to its swiftness, made it their symbol for the wind; for which reason we may suppose the hawk, as well as the crow above, to have been a bird of note in Egypt.

‖ The eagle is said to be of so acute a sight, that when she is so high in the air that man can not see her, she can discern the smallest fish under water. My author accurately understood the nature of the creatures he describes, and seems to have been a naturalist as well as a poet, which the next note will confirm.

¶ The meaning of this question is, Knowest thou the time and circumstances of their bringing forth? for to know the time only was easy, and had nothing extraordinary in it; but the circumstance had something peculiarly expressive of God's providence, which makes the question proper in this place. Pliny observes, that the hind with young is by instinct directed to a certain herb called *Seselis*, which facilitates the birth. Thunder also (which looks like the more immediate hand of

While pregnant, they a mother's load sustain?
They bend in anguish, and cast forth their pain.
Hale are their young, from human frailties freed,
Walk unsustained, and unassisted feed:
They live at once, forsake the dam's warm side,
Take the wide world, with Nature for their guide;
Bound o'er the lawn, or seek the distant glade,
And find a home in each delightful shade.

Will the tall reem, which knows no lord but me,
Low at the crib, and ask an alms of thee?
Submit his unworn shoulder to the yoke,
Break the stiff clod, and o'er thy furrow smoke?
Since great his strength, go trust him, void of care,
Lay on his neck the toil of all the year;
Bid him bring home the seasons to thy doors,
And cast his load among the gathered stores.

Didst thou from service the wild ass discharge,
And break his bonds, and bid him live at large;
Through the wide waste, his ample mansion, roam,
And lose himself in his unbounded home?
By Nature's hand magnificently fed,
His meal is on the range of mountains spread;
As in pure air aloft he bounds along,
He sees in distant smoke the city throng;
Conscious of freedom, scorns the smothered train,
The threatening driver, and the servile rein.

Survey the warlike horse! didst thou invest
With thunder his robust distended chest?
No sense of fear his dauntless soul allays;
'Tis dreadful to behold his nostrils blaze:
To paw the vale he proudly takes delight,
And triumphs in the fulness of his might:
High raised, he snuffs the battle from afar,
And burns to plunge amid the raging war;
And mocks at death, and throws his foam around,
And in a storm of fury shakes the ground.
How does his firm, his rising heart, advance
Full on the brandished sword and shaken lance
While his fixed eye-balls meet the dazzling shield,
Gaze, and return the lightning of the field!
He sinks the sense of pain in generous pride,
Nor feels the shaft that trembles in his side;
But neighs to the shrill trumpet's dreadful blast,
Till death, and when he groans, he groans his last.

But fiercer still, the lordly lion stalks,
Grimly majestic in his lonely walks:
When round he glares, all living creatures fly;
He clears the desart with his rolling eye.
Say, mortal, does he rouse at thy command,
And roar to thee, and live upon thy hand?
Dost thou for him in forests bend thy bow,
And to his gloomy den the morsel throw,
Where, bent on death, lie hid his tawny brood,
And, crouched in dreadful ambush, pant for blood;
Or stretched on broken limbs, consume the day,
In darkness wrapt, and slumber o'er their prey?

By the pale moon they take their destined round,*
And lash their sides and furious tear the ground.
Now shrieks and dying groans the desart fill;
They rage, they rend; their ravenous jaws distil
With crimson foam; and when the banquet's o'er
They stride away, and paint their steps with gore:
In flight alone the shepherd puts his trust,
And shudders at the talon in the dust.

Mild is my Behemoth, though large his frame;
Smooth is his temper, and repressed his flame;
While unprovoked. This native of the flood
Lifts his broad foot, and puts ashore for food:
Earth sinks beneath him as he moves along
To seek the herbs, and mingle with the throng.
See, with what strength his hardened loins are bound,
All over proof, and shut against a wound!
How like a mountain cedar moves his tail!
Nor can his complicated sinews fail.
Built high and wide, his solid bones surpass
The bars of steel; his ribs are ribs of brass;
His port majestic, and his armed jaw,
Give the wide forest and the mountain law.
The mountains feed him; there the beasts admire
The mighty stranger, and in dread retire;
At length his greatness nearer they survey,
Graze in his shadow, and his eye obey.
The fens and marshes are his cool retreat,
His noontide shelter from the burning heat;
Their sedgy bosoms his wide couch are made,
And groves of willows give him all their shade.

His eye drinks Jordan up, when, fired with drought,
He trusts to turn its current down his throat;
In lessened waves it creeps along the plain;
He sinks a river, and he thirsts again.

Go to the Nile, and, from its fruitful side,
Cast forth thy line into the swelling tide;
With slender hair Leviathan† command,
And stretch his vastness on the loaded strand.
Will he become thy servant? will he own
Thy lordly nod, and tremble at thy frown?
Or with his sport amuse thy leisure day,
And, bound in silk with thy soft maidens play?

Shall pompous banquets swell with such a prize?
And the bowl journey round his ample size?
Or the debating merchant share the prey,
And various limbs to various marts convey?
Through his firm skull what steel its way can win?
What forceful engine can subdue his skin?

Providence) has the same effect, *Ps.* xxix. In so early an age to observe these things may style our author a naturalist.

* Pursuing their prey by night is true of most wild beasts, particularly the lion, *Psal.* civ. 20. The Arabians have one among their five hundred names for the lion, which signifies *the hunter by moonshine.*

† The taking the crocodile is most difficult. Diodorus says, they are not to be taken but by iron nets. When Augustus conquered Egypt, he struck a medal, the impress of which was a crocodile chained to a palm-tree, with this inscription, *Nemo antea religavit.*

Fly far, and live; tempt not his matchless might;
The bravest shrink to cowards in his sight;
The rashest dare not rouse him up:* who then
Shall turn on me, among the sons of men?
Am I a debtor? hast thou ever heard
Whence come the gifts which are on me conferred?
My lavish fruit a thousand vallies fills,
And mine the herds that graze a thousand hills:
Earth, sea, and air, all Nature is my own,
And stars and sun are dust beneath my throne;
And dar'st thou with the world's great Father vie,
Thou, who dost tremble at my creature's eye?
At full my huge Leviathan shall rise,
Boast all his strength, and spread his wondrous size:
Who, great in arms, e'er stript his shining mail,
Or crowned his triumph with a single scale?
Whose heart sustains him to draw near? Behold
Destruction yawns;† his spacious jaws unfold,
And, marshalled round the wide expanse, disclose
Teeth edged with death, and crowding rows on rows:
What hideous fangs on either side arise!
And what a deep abyss between them lies!
Mete with thy lance, and with thy plumbet sound,
The one how long, the other how profound!
His bulk is charged with such a furious soul,
That clouds of smoke from his spread nostrils roll
As from a furnace; and, when roused his ire,
Fate issues from his jaws in streams of fire.‡
The rage of tempests, and the roar of seas,
Thy terror, this thy great superior please;
Strength on his ample shoulder sits in state;
His well joined limbs are dreadfully complete;
His flakes of solid flesh are slow to part;
As steel his nerves, as adamant his heart.
When, late awaked, he rears him from the floods,
And stretching forth his stature to the clouds,
Writhes in the sun aloft his scaly height,
And strikes the distant hills with transient light,
Far round are fatal damps of terror spread,
The mighty fear, nor blush to own their dread.
Large is his front; and when his burnished eyes
Lift their broad lids, the morning seems to rise.*
In vain may death in various shapes invade,
The swift-winged arrow, the descending blade;
His naked breast their impotence defies;
The dart rebounds, the brittle faulchion flies.
Shut in himself, the war without he hears,
Safe in the tempest of their rattling spears;
The cumbered strand their wasted vollies strow;
His sport the rage and labour of the foe.
His pastimes like a caldron boil the flood,
And blacken ocean with a rising mud;
The billows feel him as he works his way,
His hoary footsteps shine along the sea;
The foam high-wrought, with white divides the green,
And distant sailors point where death has been.
His like earth bears not on her spacious face;
Alone in nature stands his dauntless race,
For utter ignorance of fear renowned:
In wrath he rolls his baleful eye around;
Makes every swoln disdainful heart subside,
And holds dominion o'er the sons of Pride.
Then the Chaldean eased his labouring breast,
With full conviction of his crime oppressed.
"Thou can'st accomplish all things, Lord of might!
And every thought is naked to thy sight:
But, oh! thy ways are wonderful, and lie
Beyond the deepest reach of mortal eye.
Oft have I heard of thine Almighty power,
But never saw thee till this dreadful hour.
O'erwhelmed with shame, the Lord of life I see,
Abhor myself, and give my soul to thee;
Nor shall my weakness tempt thine anger more:
Man is not made to question, but adore."

* This alludes to a custom of this creature, which is when gated with fish, to come ashore and sleep among the reeds.

† The crocodile's mouth is exceeding wide. When he gapes, says Pliny, *sit totum os.* Martial says to his old woman,

Cum comparata rictibus tuis ora
Niliacus habet crocodilus augusta.

So that the expression there is barely just.

‡ This too is nearer truth than at first view may be imagined. The crocodile, say the naturalists, lying long under water, and being there forced to hold its breath, when it emerges, the breath long repressed is hot, and bursts out so violently, that it resembles fire and smoke. The horse suppresses not his breath by any means so long, neither is he so fierce and animated; yet the most correct of poets ventures to use the same metaphor concerning him.

Collectumque premens volvit sub naribus ignem.

By this and the foregoing note, I would caution against a false opinion of the Eastern boldness, from passages in them ill understood.

* *His eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.* I think this gives us as great an image of the thing it would express as can enter the thought of man. It is not improbable that the Egyptians stole their hieroglyphic for the morning, which is the crocodile's eye, from this passage, though no commentator I have seen mentions it. It is easy to conceive how the Egyptians should be both readers and admirers of the writings of Moses, whom I suppose the author of this poem.

I have observed already that three or four of the creatures here described are Egyptian; the two last are notoriously so; they are the river-horse and the crocodile, those celebrated inhabitants of the Nile; and on these two it is that our author chiefly dwells. It would have been expected from an author more remote from that river than Moses, in a catalogue of creatures produced to magnify their Creator, to have dwelt on the two largest works of his hand, *viz.* the elephant and the whale. This is so natural an expectation, that some commentators have rendered behemoth and leviathan the elephant and whale, though the descriptions in our author will not admit of it; but Moses being, as we may well suppose, under an immediate terror of the hippopotamus and crocodile, from their daily mischiefs and ravages around him, it is very accountable why he should permit them to take place.

Resignation.

IN TWO PARTS.

AND A POSTSCRIPT.

TO MRS. B*****.

My soul shall be satisfied, even as it were with marrow and fatness; when my mouth praiseth thee with joyful lips.
Psalm lxiii. 5

PART I.

The days how few, how short the years,
Of man's too rapid race!
Each leaving as it swiftly flies,
A shorter in its place.

They who the longest lease enjoy,
Have told us with a sigh,
That to be born seems little more
Than to begin to die.

Numbers there are who feel this truth
With fears alarmed; and yet,
In life's delusion lulled asleep,
This weighty truth forget.

And am I not to these akin?
Age slumbers o'er the quill;
Its honour blots whate'er it writes,
And am I writing still?

Conscious of Nature in decline,
And languor in my thoughts,
To soften censure and abate
Its rigour on my faults,

Permit me, Madam! ere to you
The promised verse I pay,
To touch on felt Infirmity,
Sad sister of Decay.

One world deceased, another born,
Like Noah they behold,
O'er whose white hairs and furrowed brows
Too many suns have rolled.

Happy the patriarch! he rejoiced
His second world to see;
My second world, though gay the scene,
Can boast no charms for me.

To me this brilliant age appears
With desolation spread!
Near all with whom I lived and smiled,
Whilst life was life, are dead;

And with them died my joys: the grave
Has broken Nature's laws,
And closed against this feeble frame
Its partial cruel jaws:

Cruel to spare! condemned to life!
A cloud impairs my sight!
My weak hand disobeys my will,
And trembles as I write.

What shall I write? Thalia tell;
Say, long abandoned muse!
What field of fancy shall I range?
What subject shall I choose?

A choice of moment high inspire,
And rescue me from shame,
For doting on thy charms so late,
By grandeur in my theme.

Beyond the themes which most admire,
Which dazzle or amaze;
Beyond renowned exploits of war,
Bright charms, or empire's blaze,

Are themes, which, in a world of wo,
Can best appease our pain,
And in an age of gaudy guilt,
Gay Folly's flood restrain;

Amidst the storms of life support
A calm unshaken mind,
And with unfading laurels crown
The brow of the resigned.

O Resignation! yet unsung,
Untouched by former strains,
Though claiming every muse's smile,
And every poet's pains:

Beneath life's evening solemn shade
I dedicate my page
To thee, thou safest guard of youth!
Thou sole support of age!

All other duties crescents are
Of virtue faintly bright;
The glorious consummation thou!
Which fills her orb with light:

How rarely filled! the love divine
In evils to discern:
This the first lesson which we want,
The latest which we learn:

A melancholy truth! for know,
Could our proud hearts resign,

The distance greatly would decrease
'Twixt human and divine.

But though full noble is my theme,
Full urgent is my call
To soften sorrow, and forbid
The bursting tear to fall:

The task I dread: dare I to leave
Of human prose the shore,
And put to sea! a dangerous sea!
What throngs have sunk before!

How proud the poet's billows swell!
The God! the God! his boast;
A boast how vain! what wrecks abound!
Dead bards stench every coast.

What then am I? shall I presume,
On such a moulten wing,
Above the general wreck to rise
And in my winter sing?

When nightingales, when sweetest bards,
Confine their charming song
To summer's animating heats,
Content to warble young.

Yet write I must; a lady* sues;
How shameful her request!
My brain in labour for dull rhyme!
Hers teeming with the best!

But you a stranger will excuse,
Nor scorn his feeble strain;
To you a stranger, but, through fate,
No stranger to your pain.

The ghost of Grief deceased ascends,
His old wound bleeds anew;
His sorrows are recalled to life
By those he sees in you:

Too well he knows the twisted strings
Of ardent hearts combined,
When rent asunder, how they bleed,
How hard to be resigned.

Those tears you pour his eyes have shed;
The pang you feel he felt;
Thus Nature, loud as Virtue, bids
His heart at yours to melt.

But what can heart or mead suggest?
What sad Experience say?
Through truths austere to peace we work
Our rugged gloomy way.

What are we? whence? for what? and whither?
Who know not needs must mourn:
But Thought, bright daughter of the Skies!
Can tears to triumph turn.

Thought is our armour; 'Tis the mind's
Impenetrable shield,
When, sent by Fate, we meet our foes
In sore Affliction's field:

It plucks the frightful mask from ills,
Forbids pale fear to hide,
Beneath that dark disguise a friend,
Which turns Affection's tide.

Affection frail! trained up by Sense,
From Reason's channel strays,
And whilst it blindly points at peace,
Our peace to pain betrays.

Thought winds its fond erroneous stream
From daily-dying flowers,
To nourish rich immortal blooms,
In amaranthine bowers:

Whence throngs, in ecstacy, look down
On what once shocked their sight,
And thank the terrors of the past
For ages of delight.

All withers here; who most possess
Are losers by their gain;
Stung by full proof, that, bad at best,
Life's idle, all is vain:

Vain, in its course, life's murm'ring stream;
Did not its course offend,
But murmur cease, life, then, would seem
Still vainer from its end.

How wretched! who, through cruel fate,
Have nothing to lament,
With the poor alms this world affords,
Deplorably content?

Had not the Greek his world mistook,
His wish had been most wise;
To be content with but one world,
Like him, we should despise.

Of earth's revenue would you state
A full account and fair?
We hope, and hope, and hope, then cast
The total up—despair.

Since vain all here, all future, vast,
Embrace the lot assigned;
Heaven wounds to heal; its frowns are friends;
Its strokes severe most kind.

But in lapsed nature rooted deep,
Blind Error domineers,
And on fools' errands in the dark,
Sends out our hopes and fears;

Bids us for ever pains deplore,
Our pleasures over-prize;
These oft persuade us to be weak,
Those urge us to be wise.

* Mrs. M——.

From Virtue's rugged path to right,
By pleasure are we brought
To flowery fields of wrong, and there
Pain chides us for our fault:

Yet whilst it chides it speaks of peace,
If folly is withstood,
And says, Time pays an easy price,
For our eternal good.

In earth's dark cot, and in an hour,
And in delusion great,
What an economist is man!
To spend his whole estate,

And beggar an eternity!
For which, as he was born,
More worlds than one against it weighed,
As feathers he should scorn.

Say not your loss in triumph leads,
Religion's feeble strife;
Joys future amply reimburse
Joys bankrupts of this life.

But not deferred your joy so long,
It bears an early date;
Affliction's ready pay in hand
Befriends our present state.

What are the tears which trickle down
Her melancholy face,
Like liquid pearl? like pearls of price,
They purchase lasting peace.

Grief softens hearts, and curbs the will,
Impetuous passion tames,
And keeps insatiate keen desire
From launching in extremes.

Through Time's dark womb, our judgment right,
If our dim eye was thrown,
Clear should we see the will divine
Has but forestalled our own.

At variance with our future wish,
Self-severed, we complain:
If so, the wounded, not the wound,
Must answer for the pain.

The day shall come, and swift of wing,
Though you may think it slow,
When, in the list of Fortune's smiles,
You'll enter frowns of wo.

For mark the path of Providence;
This course it has pursued,
"Pain is the parent, wo the womb,
Of sound important good:"

Our hearts are fastened to this world
By strong and endless ties;
And every sorrow cuts a string,
And urges us to rise.

'Twill sound severe—yet rest assured
I'm studious of your peace;
Though I should dare to give you joy—
Yes, joy of his decease.

An hour shall come, (you question this)
An hour, when you shall bless,
Beyond the brightest beams of life,
Dark days of your distress.

Hear then, without surprise, a truth,
A daughter truth to this,
Swift turns of fortune often tie
A bleeding heart to bliss.

Esteem you this a paradox?
My sacred motto read;
A glorious truth, divinely sung
By one whose heart had bled.

To resignation swift he flew;
In her a friend he found;
A friend which blessed him with a smile,
When gasping with his wound.

On earth nought precious is obtained
But what is painful too;
By travel, and to travel born,
Our sabbaths are but few.

To real joy we work our way,
Encountering many a shock,
Ere found what truly charms, as found
A Venus in the block.

In some disaster, some severe
Appointment for our sins,
That mother-blessing, (not so called
True happiness, begins.

No martyr e'er defied the flames
By stings of life unvexed;
First rose some quarrel with this world,
Then passion for the next.

You see then pangs are parent pangs,
The pangs of happy birth;
Pangs, by which only can be born
True happiness on earth.

The peopled earth look all around,
Or through times records run,
And say, what is a man unstruck?
It is a man undone.

This moment am I deeply stung—
My bold pretence is tried.
When vain man boasts, heaven puts to proof
The vauntings of his pride.

Now need I, Madam! your support.—
How exquisite the smart!
How critically timed the news*
Which strikes me to the heart!

* The death of Mr Richardson.

The pangs of which I spoke I feel:
If worth like thine is borne,
O long beloved! I bless the blow,
And triumph whilst I mourn.

Nor mourn I long; by grief subdued
Be reason's empire shown,
Deep anguish comes by heaven's decree.
Continues by our own;

And when continued past its point,
Indulged in length of time,
Grief is disgrace, and what was fate
Corrupts into a crime.

And shall I, criminally mean,
Myself and subject wrong?
No; my example shall support
The subject of my song.

Madam! I grant your loss is great,
Nor little is your gain:
Let that be weighed; when weighed aright,
It richly pays your pain.

When heaven would kindly set us free,
And earth's enchantments end,
It takes the most effectual means,
And robs us of a friend.

But such a friend!—and sigh no more!
'Tis prudent, but severe:
Heaven aid my weakness, and I drop
All sorrow- with this tear.

Perhaps your settled grief to sooth
I should not vainly strive,
But with soft balm your pain assuage,
Had he been still alive;

Whose frequent aid brought kind relief
In my distress of thought,
Tinged with his beams my cloudy page,
And beautified a fault.

To touch our passions' secret springs
Was his peculiar care;
And deep his happy genius dived
In bosoms of the fair.

Nature, which favours to the few
All art beyond imparts,
To him presented, at his birth,
The key of human hearts.

But not to me by him bequeathed
His gentle smooth address;
His tender hand to touch the wound
In throbbings of distress.

Howe'er, proceed I must, unblessed
With Æsculapian art:
Know, Love, sometimes, mistaken Love!
Plays Disaffection's part

Nor lands, nor seas, nor suns, nor stars,
Can soul from soul divide;
They correspond from distant worlds,
Though transports are denied.

Are you not then unkindly kind?
Is not your love severe?
O! stop that crystal source of wo,
Nor wound him with a tear.

As those above from human bliss
Receive increase of joy,
May not a stroke from human wo,
In part their peace destroy?

He lives in those he left;—to what!
Your now paternal care:
Clear from its clouds your brightened eye,
It will discern him there;

In features, not of form alone,
But those, I trust of mind,
Auspicious to the public weal,
And to their fate resigned.

Think on the tempests he sustained,
Revolve his battles won,
And let those prophesy your joy
From such a father's son.

Is consolation what you seek?
Fan then his martial fire,
And animate to flame the sparks
Bequeathed him by his sire.

As nothing great is born in haste,
Wise Nature's time allow;
His father's laurels may descend,
And flourish on his brow.

Nor, Madam! be surprised to hear,
That laurels may be due
Not more to heroes of the field
(Proud boasters!) than to you.

Tender as is the female frame,
Like that brave man you mourn,
You are a soldier, and to fight
Superior battles born.

Beneath a banner nobler far
Than ever was unfurled
In fields of blood; a banner bright!
High-waved o'er all the world;

It, like a streaming meteor, casts
An universal light;
Sheds day, sheds more, eternal day,
On nations whelmed in night.

Beneath that banner, what exploit
Can mount our glory higher,
Than to sustain the dreadful blow,
When those we love expire?

Go forth a moral Amazon,
Armed with undaunted thought;
The battle won, though costing dear,
You'll think it cheaply bought.

The passive hero, who sits down
Unactive, and can smile
Beneath Affliction's galling load,
Outacts a Cæsar's toil.

The billows stained by slaughtered foes
Inferior praise afford;
Reason's a bloodless conqueror
More glorious than the sword.

Nor can the thunder of huzzas
From shouting nations, cause
Such sweet delight, as from your heart
Soft whispers of applause.

The dear deceased so famed in arms,
With what delight he'll view
His triumphs on the main outdone,
Thus conquered twice by you!

Share his delight; take heed to shun
Of bosoms most diseased
That odd distemper, and absurd
Reluctance to be pleased.

Some seem in love with Sorrow's charms,
And that foul fiend embrace;
This temper let me justly brand
And stamp it with disgrace.

Sorrow! of horrid parentage!
Thou second-born of hell!
Against heaven's endless mercies poured
How dar'st thou to rebel?

From black and noxious vapours bred,
And nursed by want of thought,
And to the door of Frenzy's self
By Perseverance brought.

Thy most inglorious coward tears,
From brutal eyes have ran;
Smiles, incommunicable smiles!
Are radiant marks of man;

They cast a sudden glory round
The illumined human face;
And light, in sons of honest Joy,
Some beams of Moses' face.

Is Resignation's lesson hard?
Examine, we shall find
That duty gives up little more
Than anguish of the mind.

Resign; and all the load of life
That moment you remove;
Its heavy tax, ten thousand cares
Devolve on One above:

Who bids us lay our burden down
On his Almighty hand,
Softens our duty to relief,
To blessing a command.

For joy what cause! how every sense
Is courted from above,
The year around, with presents rich
The growth of endless love!

But must o'erlook the blessings poured,
Forget the wonders done,
And terminate, wrapt up in sense,
Their prospect at the sun;

From that their final point of view,
From that their radiant goal,
On travel infinite of thought,
Sets out the nobler soul.

Broke loose from Time's tenacious ties,
And earth's involving gloom,
To range at large its vast domain,
And talk with worlds to come:

They let unmarked, and unemployed
Life's idle moments run;
And doing nothing for themselves,
Imagine nothing done.

Fatal mistake! their fate goes on,
Their dread account proceeds,
And their not-doing is set down
Amongst their darkest deeds.

Though man sits still, and takes his ease,
God is at work on man:
No means, no moments unemployed,
To bless him, if he can.

But man consents not, boldly bent
To fashion his own fate;
Man, a mere bungler in the trade,
Repents his crime too late.

Hence loud laments. Let me thy cause,
Indulgent Father! plead;
Of all the wretches we deplore,
Not one by thee was made.

What is thy whole creation fair?
Of love divine the child:
Love brought it forth, and, from its birth,
Has o'er it fondly smiled.

Now, and through periods distant far,
Long ere the world began,
Heaven is, and has in travail been,
Its birth the good of man.

Man holds in constant service bound
The blustering winds and seas;
Nor suns disdain to travel hard,
Their master, man, to please.

To final good the worst events
Through secret channels run;
Finish, for man, their destined course,
As 'twas for man begun.

One point (observed, perhaps, by few)
Has often smote, and smites
My mind, as demonstration strong
That heaven in man delights.

What 's known to man of things unseen,
Of future worlds or fates?
So much, nor more, than what to man's
Sublime affairs relates.

What 's revelation then? a list,
An inventory just,
Of that poor insects goods so late
Called out of night and dust.

What various motives to rejoice!
To render joy sincere,
Has this no weight? Our joy is felt
Beyond this narrow sphere.

Would we in heaven new heaven create,
And double its delight?
A smiling world, when heaven looks down,
How pleasing in its sight!

Angels stoop forward from the thrones
To hear its joyful lays;
As incense sweet enjoy, and join,
Its aromatic praise.

Have we no cause to fear the stroke
Of heaven's avenging rod,
When we presume to counteract
A sympathetic God?

If we resign, our patience makes
His rod an harmless wand;
If not, it darts a serpent's sting,
Like that in Moses' hand;

Like that it swallows up whate'er
Earth's vain magicians bring,
Whose baffled arts would boast below
Of joys a rival spring.

Consummate love! the list how large
Of blessings from thy hand?
To banish sorrow, and be blessed,
s thy supreme command.

Are such commands but ill obeyed?
Of bliss shall we complain?
The man who dares to be a wretch
Deserves still greater pain.

Joy is our duty, glory, health;
The sunshine of the soul;
Our best encomium on the power
Who sweetly plans the whole.

Joy is our Eden still possessed:
Begone, ignoble Grief!
'Tis joy makes gods, and men exalt
Their nature our relief:

Relief, for man to that must stoop,
And his due distance know;
Transport 's the language of the skies,
Content the style below.

Content is joy; and joy in pain
Is joy and virtue too;
Thus, whilst good present we possess,
More precious we pursue.

Of joy the more we have in hand
The more have we to come;
Joy, like our money, interest bears,
Which daily swells the sum.

"But how to smile, to stem the tide
Of nature in our veins;
Is it not hard to weep in joy?
What then to smile in pains?"

Victorious joy! which breaks the clouds
And struggles through a storm,
Proclaims the mind as great as good,
And bids it doubly charm.

If doubly charming in our sex,
A sex by nature bold,
What then in yours? 'tis diamond there
Triumphant o'er our gold.

And should not this complaint repress
And check the rising sigh?
Yet farther opiate to your pain
I labour to supply.

Since spirits greatly damped distort
Ideas of delight,
Look through the medium of a friend,
To set your notions right.

As tears the sight, grief dims the soul;
Its object dark appears;
True friendship, like a rising sun,
The soul's horizon clears.

A friend 's an optic to the mind
With sorrow clouded o'er;
And gives it strength of sight to see
Redress unseen before.

Reason is somewhat rough in man;
Extremely smooth and fair,
When she, to grace her manly strength,
Assumes a female air.

A friend you have,* and I the same,
Whose prudent soft address

* Mrs. M——

Will bring to life those healing thoughts,
Which died in your distress.

That friend, the spirit of my theme
Extracting for your ease,
Will leave me to the dreg, in thoughts
Too common, such as these.

Let those lament, to whom full bowls
Of sparkling joys are given;
That triple bane inebriates life,
Imbitters death, and hazards heaven.

Wo to the soul at perfect ease!
'Tis brewing perfect-pains;
Lulled Reason sleeps, the Pulse is king;
Despotic Body reigns.

Have you ne'er pitied Joy's gay scenes,
And deemed their glory dark?
Alas, poor Envy! she 's stone blind,
And quite mistakes her mark:

Her mark lies hid in Sorrow's shades,
But sorrow well subdued;
And in proud Fortune's frown defied
By meek, unborrowed good.

By Resignation; all in that
A double friend may find,
A wing to heaven, and, while on earth,
The pillow of mankind.

On pillows void of down for rest
Our restless hopes we place;
When hopes of heaven lie warm at least,
Our hearts repose in peace.

That peace which resignation yields,
Who feel alone can guess:
'Tis disbelieved by murmuring minds,
They must conclude it less.

The loss or gain of that alone
Have we to hope or fear;
That Fate controls, and can invert
The seasons of the year.

O! the dark days, the year around,
Of an impatient mind;
Through clouds, and storms, a summer breaks,
To shine on the resigned.

While man, by that, of every grace
And virtue is possessed,
Foul Vice her Pandæmonium builds
In the rebellious breast.

By Resignation we defeat
The worst that can annoy,
And suffer with far more repose
Than worldlings can enjoy.

From small experience this I speak;
O grant to those I love
Experience fuller far, ye powers
Who form our fates above!

My love where due, if not to those
Who leaving grandeur, came
To shine on age in mean recess,
And light me to my theme?

A theme themselves! a theme how rare!
The charms which they display,
To triumph over captive heads,
Are set in bright array.

With his own arms proud man's o'ercome,
His boasted laurels die;
Learning and Genius, wiser grown,
To female bosoms fly.

This revolution, fixed by Fate,
In fable was foretold;
The dark prediction puzzled wits,
Nor could the learned unfold.

But as those ladies'* works I read,
They darted such a ray,
The latent sense burst out at once,
And shone in open day.

So burst full ripe distended fruits,
When strongly strikes the sun;
And from the purple grape unpressed,
Spontaneous nectars run.

Pallas, ('tis said) when Jove grew dull,
Forsook his drowsy brain,
And sprightly leaped into the throne
Of Wisdom's brighter reign;

Her helmet took; that this, shot rays
Of formidable wit;
And lance,—or genius most acute,
Which lines immortal writ;

And Gorgon shield,—or, power to fright
Man's folly dreadful shone;
And many a blockhead (easy change!)
Turned instantly to stone.

Our authors male, as then did Jove,
Now scratch a damaged head,
And call for what once quartered there,
But find the goddess fled.

The fruit of knowledge, golden fruit!
That once forbidden tree,
Hedged in by surly man, is now
To Britain's daughters free.

* Mrs. Montague, Mrs. Carter.

in Eve (we know) of fruit so fair
The noble thirst began;
And they, like her, have caused a fall,
A fall of fame in man.

And since of genius in our sex,
O Addison! with thee
The sun is set, how I rejoice
This sister lamp to see!

It sheds, like Cynthia, silver beams
On man's nocturnal state:
His lessened light, and languid powers,
I show, whilst I relate.

PART II.

But what in either sex, beyond
All parts, our glory crowns?
"In ruffling seasons to be calm,
And smile while fortune frowns."

Heaven's choice is safer than our own:
Of ages past inquire.
What the most formidable fate?
"To have our own desire."

If, in your wrath, the worst of foes
You wish extremely ill;
Expose him to the thunder's stroke,
Or that of his own will.

What numbers rushing down the steep
Of inclination strong,
Have perished in the ardent wish!
Wish ardent, ever wrong!

'Tis Resignation's full reverse,
Most wrong, as it implies
Error most fatal in our choice,
Detachment from the skies.

By closing with the skies, we make
Omnipotence our own;
That done, how formidable Ill's
Whole army is o'erthrown!

No longer impotent and frail,
Ourselves above we rise;
We scarce believe ourselves below;
We trespass on the skies.

The Lord, and Soul, and source of all,
Whilst man enjoys his ease,
Is executing human will
In earth, and air, and seas.

Beyond us what can angels boast?
Archangels what, require?
Whate'er below, above, is done,
Is done as we desire.

What glory this for man so mean,
Whose life is but a span?
This is meridian majesty!
This the sublime of man!

Beyond the boast of Pagan song
My sacred subject shines,
And for a soil the lustre takes
Of Rome's exalted lines.

"All that the sun surveys subdued,
But Cato's mighty mind"—
How grand! most true: yet far beneath
The soul of the resigned

To more than kingdoms, more than worlds,
To passion that gives law:
Its matchless empire could have kept
Great Cato's pride in awe.

That fatal pride, whose cruel point
Transfixed his noble breast;
Far nobler! if his fate sustained
Had left to Heaven the rest:

Then he the palm had borne away,
At distance Cæsar thrown:
Put him off cheaply with the world,
And made the skies his own.

What can not Resignation do?
It wonders can perform:
That powerful charm, "Thy will be done,"
Can lay the loudest storm.

Come, Resignation! then, from fields,
Where, mounted on the wing,
A wing of flame, blessed martyrs' souls
Ascended to their King.

Who is it calls thee? One whose need
Transcends the common size;
Who stands in front against a foe
To which none equal rise:

In front he stands, the brink he treads
Of an eternal state!
How dreadful his appointed post!
How strongly armed by fate!

His threatening foe! what shadows deep
O'erwhelm his gloomy brow!
His dart tremendous!—at fourscore
My sole asylum thou.

Haste then, O Resignation! haste,
'Tis thine to reconcile
My foe and me; at thy approach,
My foe begins to smile.

O for that summit of my wish,
Whilst here I draw my breath,
That promise of eternal life,
A glorious smile in death.

What sight, heaven's azure arch beneath,
Hast most of Heaven to boast?
The man resigned, at once serene,
And giving up the ghost.

At death's arrival they shall smile
Who, not in life o'er-gay,
Serious and frequent thought send out
To meet him in his way.

My gay coevals! (such there are)
If happiness is dear,
Approaching Death's alarming day
Discreetly let us fear.

The fear of death is truly wise,
Till wisdom can rise higher;
And, armed with pious fortitude,
Death, dreaded once, desire.

Grand climacteric vanities
The vainest will despise;
Shocked when, beneath the snow of age,
Man immaturely dies.

But am not I myself the man?
No need abroad to roam
In quest of faults to be chastised;
What cause to blush at home!

In life's decline, when men relapse
Into the sports of youth,
The second child outfools the first,
And tempts the lash of Truth;

Shall a mere truant from the grave
With rival boys engage?
His trembling voice attempt to sing,
And ape the poet's rage?

Here, Madam! let me visit one,
My fault who partly shares,
And tell myself, by telling him,
What more becomes our years.

And if your breast with prudent zeal
For Resignation glows,
You will not disapprove a just
Resentment at its foes.

In youth, Voltaire! our foibles plead
For some indulgence due;
When heads are white, their thoughts and aims
Should change their colour too.

How are you cheated by your wit!
Old age is bound to pay,
By Nature's law, a mind discreet,
For joys it takes away.

A mighty change is wrought by years,
Reversing human lot;
In age 'tis honour to be hid,
'Tis praise to be forgot;

The wise, as flowers, which spread at noon,
And all their charms expose,
When evening damps and shades descend,
Their evolutions close.

What though your Muse has nobly soared,
Is that our true sublime?
Ours, hoary friend! is to prefer
Eternity to time.

Why close a life so justly famed
With such bold trash as this?*
This for renown? yes, such as makes
Obscurity a bliss.

Your trash, with mine at open war
Is obstinately bent,†
Like wits below, to sow your tares
Of gloom and discontent.

With so much sunshine at command,
Why light with darkness mix?
Why dash with pain our pleasure? why
Your Helicon with Styx?

Your works in our divided minds
Repugnant passions raise,
Confound us with a double stroke;
We shudder, whilst we praise:

A curious web, as finely wrought
As genius can inspire,
From a black bag of poison spun,
With horror we admire.

Mean as it is, if this is read
With a disdainful air,
I can't forgive so great a foe
To my dear friend Voltaire.

Early I knew him, early praised,
And long to praise him late;
His genius greatly I admire,
Nor would deplore his fate:

A fate how much to be deplored,
At which our nature starts!
Forbear to fall on your own sword,
To perish by your parts.

"But great your name"—To feed on air
Were then immortals born?
Nothing is great, of which more great,
More glorious is the scorn.

Can fame your carcass from the worm,
Which gnaws us in the grave,
Or soul from that which never dies,
Applauding Europe save?

But fame you lose; good sense alone
Your idol, praise can claim;
When wild wit murders happiness
It puts to death our fame.

* Candid. † Second Part.

Nor boast our genius; talents bright
E'en dunces will despise.
If in your western beams is missed
A genius for the skies.

Your taste, too, fails: what most excels,
True taste must relish most;
And what, to rival palms above,
Can proudest laurels boast?

Sound heads salvation's helmet* seek;
Resplendent are its rays:†
Let that suffice; it needs no plume
Of sublunary praise.

May this enable couched Voltaire
To see that—all is right,
His eye, by flash of wit struck blind,
Restoring to its sight.

If so, all's well: who much have erred,
That much have been forgiven;
I speak with joy, with joy he'll hear,
"Voltaires are now in heaven."

Nay, such philanthropy divine,
So boundless in degree,
Its marvellous of love extends
(Stoop most profound!) to me.

Let others cruel stars arraign,
Or dwell on their distress;
But let my page, for mercies poured,
A grateful heart express.

Walking, the present God was seen,
Of old, in Eden fair;
The God as present, by plain steps
Of providential care,

I behold passing through my life;
His awful voice I hear;
And conscious of my nakedness,
Would hide myself for fear:

But where the trees, or where the clouds,
Can cover from his sight?
Naked the centre to that eye
To which the sun is night.

As yonder glittering lamps on high
Through night illumined roll;
May thoughts of him by whom they shine
Chase darkness from my soul!

My soul, which reads his hand as clear
In my minute affairs,
As in his ample manuscript
Of sun, and moon, and stars;

And knows him not more bent aright
To wield that vast machine,
Than to correct one erring thought
In my small world within.

A world that shall survive the fall
Of all his wonders here;
Survive, when suns ten thousand drop,
And leave a darkened sphere.

Yon matter gross, how bright it shines!
For time how great his care!
Sure spirit and eternity
Far richer glories share.

Let those our hearts impress, on those
Our contemplation dwell;
On those my thoughts how justly thrown,
By what I now shall tell!

When backward with attentive mind
Life's labyrinth I trace,
I find him far myself beyond
Propitious to my peace:

Through all the crooked paths I trod
My folly he pursued;
My heart astray, to quick return
Importunately wooed.

Due Resignation home to press
On my capricious will,
How many rescues did I meet
Beneath the mask of ill!

How many foes in ambush laid
Beneath my soul's desire!
The deepest penitents are made
By what we most admire.

Have I not sometimes, (real good
So little mortals know!)
Mounting the summit of my wish,
Profoundly plunged in woe?

I rarely planned, but cause I found
My plan's defeat to bless:
Oft I lamented an event,
It turned to my success.

By sharpened appetite to give
To good intense delight,
Through dark and deep perplexities
He led me to the right.

And is not this the gloomy path
Which you are treading now?
The path most gloomy leads to light,
When our proud passions bow.

When labouring under fancied ill,
My spirits to sustain,
He kindly cured with sovereign draughts
Of unimagined pain.

* Eph. vi. 17. † Which his romance ridicules.

Pained Sense from Fancy's tyranny
Alone can set us free:
A thousand miseries we feel,
Till sunk in misery.

Cloyed with a glut of all we wish,
Our wish we relish less:
Success, a sort of suicide,
Is ruined by success.

Sometimes, he led me near to death,
And, pointing to the grave,
Bid Terror whisper kind advice,
And taught the tomb to save.

To raise my thoughts beyond where worlds
As spangles o'er us shine,
One day he gave, and bid the next
My soul's delight resign.

We to ourselves, but through the means
Of mirrors are unknown;
In this my fate can you descry
No features of your own?

And if you can, let that excuse
These self recording lines;
A record modesty forbids,
Or to small bound confines.

In grief why deep ingulfed? you see
You suffer nothing rare;
Uncommon grief for common fate;
That Wisdom can not hear.

When streams flow backward to their source,
And humbled flames descend,
And mountains winged shall fly aloft,
Then human sorrows end:

But human prudence, too, must cease
When sorrows domineer,
When fortitude has lost its fire,
And freezes into fear.

The pang most poignant or my life
Now heightens my delight;
I see a fair creation rise
From Chaos and old Night.

From what seemed horror and despair,
The richest harvest rose,
And gave me in the nod divine,
An absolute repose.

Of all the blunders of mankind,
More gross or frequent, none,
Than in their grief and joy misplaced
Eternally are shown.

But whither points all this parade?
It says, that near you lies
A book, perhaps, yet unperused,
Which you should greatly prize.

Of self-perusal, science rare!
Few know the mighty gain;
Learned prelates, self-unread, may read
Their Bibles o'er in vain.

Self-knowledge, which from heaven itself
(So sages tell us) came,
What is it but a daughter fair
Of my maternal theme?

Unlettered and untraveled men
An oracle might find,
Would they consult their own contents,
The Delphos of the mind.

Enter your bosom; there you'll find
A revolution new,
A revolution personal,
Which none can read but you.

There will you clearly read revealed
In your enlightened thought,
By mercies manifold, through life,
To fresh remembrance brought,

A mighty Being! and in him
A complicated friend,
A father, brother, spouse; no dread
Of death, divorce, or end.

Who such a matchless friend embrace,
And lodge him in their heart,
Full well, from agonies exempt,
With other friends may part.

As when o'erloaded branches bear
Large clusters big with wine,
We scarce regret one falling leaf
From the luxuriant vine.

My short advice to you may sound
Obscure, or somewhat odd,
Though 'tis the best that man can give,
"E'en be content with God."

Through love he gave you the deceased
Through greater took him hence:
This reason fully could evince,
Though murmured at by Sense.

This friend far past the kindest kind,
Is past the greatest great;
His greatness let me touch in points
Not foreign to your state.

His eye, this instant, reads your heart,
A truth less obvious hear,
This instant its most secret thoughts
Are sounding in his ear.

Dispute you this? O stand in awe,
And cease your sorrow; know,
That tear, now trickling down, he saw
Ten thousand years ago,

And twice ten thousand hence, if you
Your temper reconcile
To Reason's bound, will he behold
Your prudence with a smile;

A smile which through eternity
Diffuses so bright rays,
The dimmest deifies e'en guilt,
If guilt at last obeys.

Your guilt (for guilt it is to mourn,
When such a Sovereign reigns)
Your guilt diminish, peace pursue;
How glorious peace in pains!

Here, then, your sorrows cease, if not,
Think how unhappy they
Who guilt increase by streaming tears,
Which guilt should wash away.

Of tears that gush profuse restrain;
Whence burst the dismal sighs?
They from the throbbing breast of one
(Strange truth!) most happy rise.

Not angels (hear it, and exult!)
Enjoy a larger share
Than is indulged to you, and yours,
Of God's impartial care.

Anxious for each, as if on each
His care for all was thrown;
For all his care as absolute
As all had been but one.

And is he then so near? so kind?—
How little then, and great,
That riddle, man! O let me gaze
At wonders in his fate!

His fate, who yesterday did crawl
A worm from darkness deep,
And shall, with brother worms, beneath
A turf, to-morrow sleep.

How mean! and yet if well obeyed
His mighty master's call,
The whole creation for mean man
Is deemed a boon too small:

Too small the whole creation deemed
For emmets in the dust!
Account amazing! yet most true;
My song is bold, yet just.

Man born for infinite, in whom
No period can destroy
The power, in exquisite extremes
To suffer, or enjoy.

Give him earth's empire (if no more)
He 's beggared and undone!
Imprisoned in unbounded space!
Benighted by the sun!

For what 's the sun's meridian blaze
To the most feeble ray
Which glimmers in the distant dawn
Of uncreated day?

'Tis not the poet's rapture feigned
Swells here, the vain to please:
The mind most sober kindles most
At truths sublime as these.

They warm e'en me.—I dare not say
Divine ambition strove
Not to bless only, but confound,
Nay fright us, with its love;

And yet so frightful what, or kind,
As that the rending rock,
The darkened sun, and rising dead,
So formidably spoke?

And are we darker than the sun?
Than rocks more hard and blind?
We are;—if not to such a God
In agonies resigned.

Yea, e'en in agonies forbear
To doubt almighty love;
Whate'er endears eternity,
Is mercy from above.

What most imbitters time, that most
Eternity endears;
And thus by plunging in distress,
Exalts us to the spheres:

Joy's fountain-head! where bliss o'er bliss,
O'er wonders wonders rise,
And an Omnipotence prepares
Its banquet for the wise;

Ambrosial banquet! rich in wines
Nectareous to the soul!
What transports sparkle from the stream,
As angels fill the bowl!

Fountain profuse of every bliss!
Good-will immense prevails:
Man's line can't fathom its profound;
An angel's plummet fails.

Thy love and might, by what they know
Who judge, nor dream of more;
They ask a drop, how deep the sea?
One sand, how wide the shore?

Of thy exuberant good-will,
Offended Deity!
The thousandth part who comprehends,
A deity is He.

How yonder ample azure field
With radiant worlds is sown!
How tubes astonish us with those
More deep in ether thrown!

And those beyond of brighter worlds
Why not a million more?
In lieu of answer, let us all
Fall prostrate and adore.

Since thou art infinite in power,
Nor thy indulgence less;
Since man, quite impotent and blind,
Oft drops into distress;

Say, what is Resignation? 'Tis
Man's weakness understood;
And Wisdom grasping, with a hand
Far stronger, every good.

Let rash repiners stand appalled,
In thee who dare not trust;
Whose abject souls, like demons dark,
Are murm'ring in the dust.

For man to murmur or repine
At what by thee is done,
No less absurd than to complain,
Of darkness in the sun.

Who would not, with a heart at ease,
Bright eye, unclouded brow,
Wisdom and Goodness at the helm,
The roughest ocean plough?

What though I'm swallowed in the deep!
Though mountains o'er me roar!
Jehovah reigns! As Jonah safe
I'm landed, and adore.

Thy will is welcome, let it wear
Its most tremendous form:
Roar, Waves! rage, Winds! I know that thou
Canst save me by a storm.

From thee immortal spirits born,
To thee their fountain flow,
If wise, as curled around to theirs
Meand'ring streams below.

Not less compelled by Reason's call,
To thee our souls aspire,
Than to thy skies, by Nature's law
High mounts material fire:

To thee aspiring they exult:
I feel my spirits rise,
I feel myself thy son, and pant
For patrimonial skies.

Since ardent thirst of future good,
And generous sense of past,
To thee man's prudence strongly ties,
And binds affection fast.

Since great thy love, and great our want,
And men the wisest blind,
And bliss our aim, pronounce us all
Distracted or resigned.

Resigned through duty, interest, shame;
Deep shame! dare I complain,
When (wondrous truth!) in heaven itself
Joy owed its birth to pain?

And pain for me! for me was drained
Gall's overflowing bowl;
And shall one drop, to murmur bold
Provoke my guilty soul?

If pardoned this, what cause, what crime,
Can indignation raise?
The sun was lighted up to shine,
And man was born to praise:

And when to praise thee man shall cease,
Or sun to strike the view;
A cloud dishonours both, but man's
The blacker of the two.

For, oh! ingratitude how black!
With most profound amaze
At love, which man, beloved, o'erlooks,
Astonished angels gaze.

Praise cheers and warms, like generous wine;
Praise, more divine than prayer:
Prayer points our ready path to heaven;
Praise is already there.

Let plausive Resignation rise,
And banish all complaint;
All virtues thronging into one,
It finishes the saint;

Makes the man blest as man can be;
Life's labours renders light;
Darts beams through Fate's incumbent gloom,
And lights our sun by night.

'Tis Nature's brightest ornament,
The richest gift of Grace,
Rival of angels, and supreme
Proprietor of peace:

Nay, peace beyond no small degree
Of rapture 'twill impart;
Know, Madam! "when your heart's in heaven,
"All heaven is in your heart."

But who to heaven their hearts can raise?
Denied divine support,
All virtue dies; support divine
The wise with ardour court:

When prayer partakes the seraph's fire,
'Tis mounted on his wing,
Bursts through heaven's crystal gates, and gains
Sure audience of its King.

The labouring soul from sore distress
That blessed expedient frees;
I see you far advanced in peace;
I see you on your knees.

How on that posture has the beam
Divine for ever shone?
An humble heart, God's other seat!*
The rival of his throne.

And stoops Omnipotence so low?
And condescends to dwell
Eternity's inhabitant,
Well-pleased in such a cell?

Such honour how shall we repay?
How treat our guest divine?—
The sacrifice supreme be slain!
Let self-will die: Resign.

Thus far, at large on our disease;
Now let the cause be shown,
Whence rises, and will ever rise,
The dismal human groan.

What our sole fountain of distress?
Strong passion for this scene;
That trifles make important, things
Of mighty moment mean.

When earth's dark maxims poison shed
On our polluted souls,
Our hearts and interests fly as far
Asunder as the poles.

Like princes in a cottage nursed
Unknown their royal race,
With abject aims and sordid joys
Our grandeur we disgrace.

O for an Archimides new
Of moral powers possessed,
The world to move and quite expel
That traitor from the breast!

No small advantage may be reaped
From thought whence we descend;
From weighing well, and prizing, weighed,
Our origin and end;

From far above the glorious sun
To this dim scene we came;
And may, if wise, for ever bask
In great Jehovah's beam:

Let that bright beam, on reason roused,
In awful lustre rise,
Earth's giant ills are dwarfed at once,
And all disquiet dies;

Earth's glories, too, their splendour lose,
Those phantoms charm no more,
Empire's a feather for a fool,
And Indian mines are poor:

Then leveled quite, whilst yet alive,
The monarch and his slave;
Nor wait enlightened minds to learn
That lesson from the grave.

A George the Third would then be low
As Lewis in renown,
Could he not boast of glory more
Than sparkles from a crown.

When human glory rises high
As human glory can;
When, though the king is truly great,
Still greater is the man:

The man is dead where virtue fails:
And though the monarch proud
In grandeur shines, his gorgeous robe
Is but a gaudy shroud.

Wisdom! where art thou? None on earth,
Though grasping wealth, fame, power,
But what, O Death! through thy approach
Is wiser every hour.

Approach how swift! how unconfined!
Worms feast on viands rare:
Those little epicures have kings
To grace their bill of fare.

From kings what resignation due
To that almighty Will,
Which thrones bestows, and, when they fail,
Can throne them higher still!

Who truly great? the good and brave,
The masters of a mind
The will divine to do resolved;
To suffer it resigned.

Madam! if that may give it weight,
The trifle you receive
Is dated from a solemn scene,
The border of the grave;

Where strongly strikes the trembling soul
Eternity's dread power,
As bursting on it through the thin
Partition of an hour.

Hear this, Voltaire! but this from me
Runs hazard of your frown;
However, spare it; ere you die,
Such thoughts will be your own.

In mercy to yourself, forbear
My notions to chastise,
Lest unawares the gay Voltaire
Should blame Voltaire the wise.

Fame's trumpet rattling in your ear
Now makes us disagree;
When a far louder trumpet sounds
Voltaire will close with me.

* Isaiah lvii. 15.

How shocking is that modesty
Which keeps some honest men
From urging what their hearts suggest,
When braved by Folly's pen,

Assaulting truths, of which in all
Is sown the sacred seed!
Our constitution 's orthodox,
And closes with our creed.

What then are they whose proud conceits
Superior wisdom boast?
Wretches, who fight their own belief,
And labour to be lost.

Though Vice by no superior joys
Her Heroes keeps in pay;
Through pure disinterested love
Of ruin they obey?

Strict their devotion to the wrong,
Though tempted by no prize;
Hard their commandments, and their creed
A magazine of lies

From Fancy's forge: gay Fancy smiles
At Reason plain and cool;
Fancy, whose curious trade it is
To make the finest fool.

Voltaire! long life's the greatest curse
That mortals can receive,
When they imagine the chief end
Of living is to live.

Quite thoughtless of their day of death,
That birthday of their sorrow;
Knowing it may be distant far,
Nor crush them till—to-morrow.

These are cold, northern thoughts conceived
Beneath an humble cot;
Not mine your genius or your state,
No Castle* is my lot.

But soon, quite level shall we lie:
And what pride most bemoans,
Our parts, in rank so distant now,
As level as their bones.

Hear you that sound? alarming sound!
Prepare to meet your fate!
One who writes *finis* to our works,
Is knocking at the gate.

Far other works will soon be weighed;
Far other judges sit:
Far other crowns be lost, or won,
Than fire ambitious wit:

Their wit far brightest will be proved
Who sunk it in good sense,
And veneration most profound
Of dread Omnipotence.

'Tis that alone unlocks the gate
Of blessed eternity!
O may'st thou never, never lose
That more than golden key!*

Whate'er may seem too rough, excuse;
Your good I have at heart;
Since from my soul I wish you well,
As yet we must not part:

Shall you and I, in love with life,
Life's future schemes contrive,
The world in wonder not unjust,
That we are still alive?

What have we left? how mean in man
A shadow's shade to crave?
When life so vain! is vainer still,
'Tis time to take our leave.

Happier than happiest life his death,
Who, falling in the field
Of conflict with his rebel will,
Writes *Vici* on his shield.

So falling man, immortal heir
Of an eternal prize,
Undaunted at the gloomy grave,
Descends into the skies.

O how disordered our machine,
When contradictions mix!
When Nature strikes no less than twelve,
And folly points at six!

To mend the movements of your heart,
How great is my delight!
Gently to wind your morals up,
And set your hand aright!

That hand which spread your wisdom wide
To poison distant lands:
Repent, recant: the tainted age
Your antidote demands.

To Satan dreadfully resigned
Whole herds rush down the steep
Of Folly, by lewd wits possessed,
And perish in the deep.

Men's praise your vanity pursues:
'Tis well, pursue it still:
But let it be of men deceased,
And you'll resign the will;

And how superior they to those
At whose applause you aim,
How very far superior they
In number and in name!

* Letter to Lord Lyttleton.

* Alluding to Prussia.

POSTSCRIPT.

Thus have I written, when to write
No mortal should presume;
Or only write, what none should blame,
Hic jacet—for his tomb.

Though public frowns, and censures loud,
My puerile employ:
Though just the censure, if you smile,
The scandal I enjoy.

But sing no more—no more I sing,
Or re-assume the lyre,
Unless vouchsafed an humble part
Where Raphael leads the choir.

What myriads swell the concert loud!
Their golden harps resound
High as the footstool of the throne,
And deep as hell profound:

Hell (horrid contrast!) chord and song
Of raptured angels drowns
In self-will's peal of blasphemies,
And hideous burst of groans;

But drowns them not to me; I hear
Harmonious thunders roll
(In language low of men to speak)
From echoing pole to pole!

Whilst this grand chorus shakes the skies—
"Above, beneath the sun,
Through boundless age, by men, by gods,
Jehovah's will be done."

'Tis done in heaven; whence headlong hurled
Self-will, with Satan fell;
And must from earth be banished too
Or earth's another hell.

Madam! self-will inflicts your pains:
Self-will's the deadly foe
Which deepens all the dismal shades,
And points the shafts of wo.

Your debt to Nature fully paid,
Now Virtue claims her due;
But Virtue's cause I need not plead,
'Tis safe; I write to you.

You know that Virtue's basis lies
In ever judging right;
And wiping Error's clouds away,
Which dim the mental sight.

Why mourn the dead? you wrong the grave,
From storm that safe resort;
We are still tossing out at sea,
Our admiral in port.

Was death denied, this world a scene
How dismal and forlorn!
To death we owe, that 'tis to man
A blessing to be born.

When every other blessing fails,
Or sapped by slow decay,
Or stormed by sudden blasts of fate,
Is swiftly hurled away;

How happy! that no storm, or time,
Of death can rob the just!
None pluck from their unaching heads
Soft pillows in the dust!

Well pleased to bear heaven's darkest frown,
Your utmost power employ;
'Tis noble chymistry to turn
Necessity to joy.

Whate'er the colour of my fate,
My fate shall be my choice;
Determined am I, whilst I breathe,
To praise and to rejoice.

What ample cause? triumphant hope!
O rich eternity!
I start not at a world in flames,
Charmed with one glimpse of thee.

And thou! its great inhabitant!
How glorious dost thou shine!
And dart through sorrow, danger, death,
A beam of joy divine.

The void of joy (with some concern
The truth severe I tell)
Is an impenitent in guilt,
A fool or infidel.

Weigh this, ye pupils of Voltaire!
From joyless murmur free;
Or, let us know, which character
Shall crown you of the three.

Resign, resign; this lesson none
Too deeply can instil;
A crown has been resigned by more
Than have resigned the will.

Though will resigned the meanest makes
Superior in renown,
And richer in celestial eyes
Than he who wears a crown.

Hence in the bosom of cold age
Is kindled a strange aim
To shine in song, and bid me boast
The grandeur of my theme:

But, oh! how far presumption falls
Its lofty theme below!
Our thoughts in life's December freeze,
And numbers cease to flow.

First! Greatest! Best! grant what I wrote
For others, ne'er may rise
To brand the writer; thou alone
Canst make our wisdom wise.

And how unwise, how deep in guilt,
How infamous the fault,
"A teacher throned in pomp of words,
In deed beneath the taught!"

Means most infallible to make
The world an infidel,
And with instructions most divine
To pave a way to hell.

O for a clean and ardent heart!
O for a soul on fire!
Thy praise, begun on earth, to sound
Where angels strike the lyre!

How cold is man! to him how hard,
(Hard what most easy seems)
"To set a just esteem on that
Which yet he most esteems."

What shall we say, when boundless bliss
Is offered to mankind,
And to that offer when a race
Of rationals is blind?

Of human nature, ne'er too high
Are our ideas wrought;
Of human merit, ne'er too low
Depressed the daring thought.

Miscellaneous Pieces.

ON THE

DEATH OF QUEEN ANNE,

AND THE

ACCESSION OF KING GEORGE.

INSCRIBED TO

JOSEPH ADDISON, ESQ.

Secretary to their Excellencies the Lords Justices.

——Guadia curis.—*Hor.*

Sir! I have long, and with impatience, sought
To ease the fulness of my grateful thought,
My fame at once and duty to pursue,
And please the public by respect to you.
Though you, long since beyond Britannia known,
Have spread your country's glory with your own,
To me you never did more lovely shine,
Than when so late the kindled wrath divine
Quenched our ambition in great Anna's fate,
And darkened all the pomp of human state.
Though you are rich in fame, and fame decay,
Though raised in life, and greatness fade away,
Your lustre brightens; virtue cuts the gloom
With purer rays, and sparkles near a tomb.
Know, Sir! the great esteem and honour due
I choose, that moment, to profess to you,
When sadness reigned, when Fortune so severe
Had warmed our bosoms to be most sincere,
And when no motive could have force to raise
A serious value, and provoke my praise,
But such as rise above, and far transcend,
Whatever glories with this world shall end,
Then shining forth, when deepest shades shall blot
The sun's bright orb, and Cato be forgot.

I sing!—but, ah! my theme I need not tell!
See every eye with conscious sorrow swell:
Who now to verse would raise his humble voice,
Can only show his duty, not his choice.
How great the weight of grief our hearts sustain!
We languish, and to speak is to complain.
Let us look back, (for who too oft can view
That most illustrious scene, for ever new!)
See all the seasons shine on Anna's throne,
And pay a constant tribute not their own.
Her summer heats not fruits alone bestow,
They reap the harvests and subdue the foe;
And when black storms confess the distant sun,
Her winters wear the wreaths her summers won:
Revolving pleasures in their turns appear,
And triumphs are the product of the year.
To crown the whole, great joys in greater cease,
And glorious victory is lost in peace.
Whence this profusion on our favoured isle?
Did partial Fortune on our virtue smile?
Or did the sceptre, in great Anna's hand,
Stretch forth this rich indulgence o'er our land?
Ungrateful Britain! quit thy groundless claim;
The queen and thy good fortune are the same.
Hear, with alarms our trumpets fill the sky;
'Tis Anna reigns; the Gallic squadrons fly.
We spread our canvass to the southern shore;
'Tis Anna reigns! the South resigns her store.
Her virtue sooths the tumult of the main,
And swells the field with mountains of the slain.
Argyle and Churchill but the glory share,
While millions lie subdued by Anna's prayer.
How great her zeal! how fervent her desire!
How did her soul in holy warmth expire!
Constant devotion did her time divide!
Nor set returns of pleasure or of pride:

Not want of rest, or the sun's parting ray,
But finished duty, limited the day.
How sweet succeeding sleep! what lovely themes
Smiled in her thoughts, and softened all her dreams!
Her royal couch descending angels spread,
And join their wings, a shelter o'er her head.
Though Europe's wealth and glory claimed a part,
Religion's cause reigned mistress of her heart;
She saw, and grieved, to see the mean estate
Of those who round the hallowed altar wait;
She shed her bounty piously profuse,
And thought it more her own in sacred use.
Thus on his furrow see the tiller stand,
And fill with genial seed his lavish hand;
He trusts the kindness of the fruitful plain,
And providently scatters all his grain.
What strikes my sight! does proud Augusta rise
New to behold, and awfully surprise!
Her lofty brow more numerous turrets crown,
And sacred domes on palaces look down;
A noble pride of piety is shown,
And temples cast a lustre on the throne.
How would this work another's glory raise;
But Anna's greatness robs her of the praise:
Drowned in a greater blaze it disappears.
Who dried the widow's and the orphan's tears?
Who stooped from high to succour the distressed,
And reconcile the wounded heart to rest?
Great in her goodness, well could we perceive,
Whoever sought, it was a queen that gave.
Misfortune lost her name: her guiltless frown
But made another debtor to the crown,
And each unfriendly stroke from fate we bore,
Became our title to the regal store.
Thus injured trees adopt a foreign shoot,
And their wounds blossom with a fairer fruit.
Ye Numbers, who on your misfortunes thrived,
When first the dreadful blast of Fame arrived,
Say, what a shock, what agonies you felt,
How did your souls with tender anguish melt!
That grief which living Anna's love suppressed,
Shook like a tempest every grateful breast.
A second fate our sinking fortunes tried;
A second time our tender parents died!
Heroes returning from the field we crown,
And deify the haughty victor's frown;
His splendid wreath too rashly we admire,
Catch the disease, and burn with equal fire.
Wisely to spend is the great art of gain;
And one relieved transcends a million slain.
When time shall ask where once Ramillia lay,
Or Danube flowed that swept whole troops away,
One drop of water, that refreshed the dry,
Shall raise a fountain of eternal joy.
But ah! to that unknown and distant date
Is Virtue's great reward pushed off by Fate;
Here random shafts in every breast are found,
Virtue and merit but provoke the wound.

August in native worth and regal state,
Anna sat arbitress of Europe's fate;
To distant realms did ev'ry accent fly,
And nations watched each motion of her eye.
Silent, nor longer awful to be seen,
How small a spot contains the mighty Queen!
No throng of suppliant princes mark the place,
Where Britain's greatness is composed in peace:
The broken earth is scarce discerned to rise,
And a stone tells us where the monarch lies.
Thus end maturest honours of the crown!
This is the last conclusion of renown!
So when, with idle skill, the wanton boy
Breathes through his tube, he sees, with eager joy,
The trembling bubble, in its rising small,
And by degrees, expands the glittering ball;
But when, to full perfection blown, it flies
High in the air, and shines in various dyes,
The little monarch, with a falling tear,
Sees his world burst at once, and disappear.
'Tis not in sorrow to reverse our doom;
No groans unlock the inexorable tomb;
Why then this fond indulgence of our wo!
What fruit can rise, or what advantage flow!
Yes, this advantage from our deep distress,
We learn how much in George the gods can bless.
Had a less glorious princess left the throne,
But half the hero had at first been shown;
And Anna falling all the King employs,
To vindicate from guilt our rising joys:
Our joys arise, and innocently shine,
Auspicious monarch! what a praise is thine!
Welcome, great Stranger! to Britannia's throne
Nor let thy country think thee all her own.
Of thy delay how oft did we complain!
Our hopes reached out, and met thee on the main.
With prayer we smoothed the billows for thy fleet.
With ardent wishes filled thy swelling sheet;
And when thy foot took place on Albion's shore,
We bending blessed the gods, and asked no more.
What hand but thine should conquer and compose,
Join those whom int'rest joins, and chase our foes?
Repel the daring youth's presumptuous aim,
And by his rival's greatness give him fame!
Now in some foreign court he may sit down,
And quit, without a blush, the British crown,
Secure his honour, though he lose his store,
And take a lucky moment to be poor.
Nor think, great Sir! now first, at this late hour
In Britain's favour you exert your power:
To us, far back in time, I joy to trace
The num'rous tokens of your princely grace.
Whether you choose to thunder on the Rhine,
Inspire grave councils, or in courts to shine:
In the more scenes your genius was displayed,
The greater debt was on Britannia laid:

They all conspired this mighty man to raise,
And your new subjects proudly shares the praise.
All share: but may not we have leave to boast,
That we contemplate and enjoy it most?
This ancient nurse of arts, indulged by Fate
On gentle Isis' bank, a calm retreat,
For many rolling ages justly famed,
Has through the world her loyalty proclaimed;
And often poured (too well the truth is known!)
Her blood and treasure to support the throne;
For England's church her latest accent strained,
And freedom with her dying hand retained;
No wonder then her various ranks agree
In all the fervencies of zeal for thee.
What though thy birth a distant kingdom boast,
And seas divide thee from the British coast?
The crown 's impatient to enclose thy head;
Why stay thy feet! The cloth of gold is spread.
Our strict obedience through the world shall tell,
That king 's a Briton who can govern well.

VERSES.

Occasioned by that famous piece of the

CRUCIFIXION.

DONE BY MICHAEL ANGELO.*

WHILE his Redeemer on his canvass dies,
Stabbed at his feet his brother weltering lies;
The daring artist, cruelly serene,
Views the pale cheek and the distorted mien;
He drains off life by drops, and, deaf to cries,
Examines every spirit as it flies:
He studies torment; dives in mortal wo;
To rouse up every pang, repeats his blow;
Each rising agony, each dreadful grace,
Yet warm, transplanting to his Saviour's face.
O glorious theft! O nobly wicked draught!
With its full charge of death each feature fraught!
Such wondrous force the magic colours boast,
From his own skill he starts, in horror lost.

AN HISTORICAL EPILOGUE

TO THE BROTHERS.

BY THE AUTHOR.

AN Epilogue through custom is your right,
But ne'er perhaps was needful till this night.
To-night the virtuous falls, the guilty flies;
Guilt's dreadful close our narrow scene denies.
In history's authentic record read
What ample vengeance gluts Demetrius' shade!
Vengeance so great, that, when his tale is told,
With pity some e'en Perseus may behold.
Perseus survived, indeed, and filled the throne,
But ceaseless cares in conquest made him groan:
Nor reigned he long; from Rome swift thunder flew,
And headlong from his throne the tyrant threw:
Thrown headlong down, by Rome in triumph led,
For this night's deed his perjured bosom bled:
His brother's ghost each moment made him start,
And all his father's anguish rent his heart.
When, robed in black, his children round him hung,
And their raised arms in early sorrow wrung;
The yonger smiled, unconscious of their wo,
At which thy tears, O Rome! began to flow,
So sad the scene: What then must Perseus feel,
To see Jove's race attend the victor's wheel?
To see the slaves of his worst foes increase
From such a source!—an emperor's embrace?
He sickened soon to death; and, what is worse,
He well deserved, and felt the coward's curse;
Unpitied, scorned, insulted his last hour,
Far, far from home, and in a vassal's power.
His pale cheek rested on his shameful chain,
No friend to mourn, no flatterer to feign.
No suit retards, no comfort sooths his doom,
And not one tear bedews a monarch's tomb.
Nor ends it thus—Dire vengeance to complete,
His ancient empire falling, shares his fate.
His throne forgot! his weeping country chained!
And nations ask—where Alexander reigned?
As public woes a prince's crimes pursue,
So public blessings are his virtue's due.
Shout, Britons! shout;—auspicious fortune bless
And cry, Long live—our title to success!

EPITAPH

ON LORD AUBREY BEAUCLERK,*

In Westminster Abbey, 1740.

WHILST Briton boasts her empire o'er the deep,
This marble shall compel the brave to weep:

* Who obtained leave to treat a malefactor, condemned to be broke upon the wheel, as he pleased for this purpose. The man being extended, this wonderful artist directed that he should be stabbed in such parts of the body as he apprehended would occasion the most excruciating torture, that he might represent the agonies of death in the most natural manner.

* Lord Aubrey Beauclerk was the eighth son of the Duke of St. Alban's, who was one of the sons of King Charles the Second. He was born in the year 1711, and being regularly bred to the sea-service, in 1731 he was appointed to the command of his Majesty's ship the Ludlow Castle; and he commanded the Prince Frederick at the attack of the harbour of Carthagena, March 24, 1741. This young nobleman was one of the most promising commanders in the King's service. When on the desperate attack of the castle of Bocca Chica, at the entrance of the said harbour, he lost his life, both his legs being first shot off. The prose part of the inscription on his monument, was the production of Mrs. Mary Jones, of Oxford, who also wrote a Poem on his death, printed in her Miscellanies, 8vo. 1752.

As men, as Britons, and as soldiers, mourn;
'Tis dauntless, loyal, virtuous Beauclerk's urn.
Sweet were his manners, as his soul was great,
And ripe his worth, though immature his fate;
Each tender grace that joy and love inspire,
Living he mingled with his martial fire:
Dying, he bid Britannia's thunders roar;
And Spain still felt him, when he breathed no more.

TO MR. ADDISON,

ON THE TRAGEDY OF CATO.

What do we see—is Cato then become
A greater name in Britain than in Rome?
Does mankind now admire his virtues more
Though Lucan, Horace, Virgil wrote before?
How will posterity this truth explain?
"Cato begins to live in Anna's reign."
The world's great chief, in council or in arms,
Rise in your lines with more exalted charms:
Illustrious deeds in distant nations wrought,
And virtues by departed heroes taught,
Raise in your soul a pure immortal flame,
Adorn your life, and consecrate your fame;
To your renown all ages you subdue,
And Cæsar fought, and Cato bled for you.

All Soul's Coll. Oxon.

EPITAPH

AT WELWYN, HERTFORDSHIRE.

If fond of what is rare, attend!
Here lies an *honest man*,
Of perfect piety,
Of lamb-like patience,
My friend, James Barker;
To whom I pay this mean memorial,
For what deserves the greatest.
An example
Which shone through all the clouds of fortune,
Industrious in low estate,
The lesson and reproach of those above him.
To lay this little stone
Is my ambition;
While others rear
The polished marbles of the great!
Vain pomp!
A turf o'er virtue charms us more.
E. Y. 1749.

THE REVENGE;

A Tragedy;

AS PERFORMED AT THE THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

PROLOGUE

BY A FRIEND.

Oft has the buskined muse with action mean,
Debased the glory of the tragic scene:
While puny villains, drest in purple pride,
With crimes obscene the heaven-born rage belied.
To her belongs to mourn the hero's fate,
To trace the errors of the wise and great;
To mark the excess of passions too refined,
And paint the tumults of a god-like mind;
Where, moved with rage, exalted thoughts combine,
And darkest deeds with beauteous colours shine.
So lights and shades in a well-mingled draught,
By curious touch of artful pencils wrought,
With soft deceit amuse the doubtful eye,
Pleased with the conflict of the various dye.
Thus, through the following scenes, with sweet surprise,
Virtue and guilt in dread confusion rise,
And love, and hate, at once, and grief and joy,
Pity and rage, their mingled force employ.
Here the soft virgin, sees, with secret shame,
Her charms excelled by friendship's purer flame,
Forced with reluctant virtues to approve
The generous hero who rejects her love.
Behold him there, with gloomy passions stained,
A wife suspected, and an injured friend;
Yet such the toil where innocence is caught,
That rash suspicion seems without a fault.
We dread awhile lest beauty should succeed,
And almost wish e'en virtue's self may bleed.
Mark well the black revenge, the cruel guile,
The traitor-fiend, trampling the lovely spoil
Of beauty, truth, and innocence opprest,
Then let the rage of furies fire your breast.
Yet may his mighty wrongs, his just disdain,
His bleeding country, his loved father slain,
His martial pride, your admiration raise,
And crown him with involuntary praise.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Don Alonzo,
Don Carlos,
Don Alvarez,
Don Manuel,
Zanga,
Leonora,
Isabella.

Scene—*Spain.*

THE REVENGE.

ACT I.

SCENE I—BATTLEMENTS, WITH A SEA PROSPECT.

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. Whether first nature, or long want of peace,
Has wrought my mind to this, I can not tell;
But horrors now are not displeasing to me:
[*thunder.*
I like this rocking of the battlements.
Rage on, ye winds, burst, clouds, and waters, roar!
You bear a just resemblance of my fortune,
And suit the gloomy habit of my soul.

Enter ISABELLA.

Who's there? my love!
Isa. Why have you left my bed?
Your absence more affrights me than the storm.
Zan. The dead alone in such a night can rest,
And I indulge my meditations here.
Woman, away. I choose to be alone.
Isa. I know you do, and therefore will not leave you;
Excuse me, Zanga, therefore dare not leave you.
Is this a night for walks of contemplation?
Something unusual hangs upon your heart
And I will know it: by our loves I will.
To you I sacrificed my virgin fame.
Ask I too much to share in your distress?
Zan. In tears? thou fool! then hear me and be plunged
In hell's abyss, if ever it escape thee,
To strike thee with astonishment at once,
I hate Alonzo. First recover that,
And then thou shalt hear farther.
Isa. Hate Alonzo!
I own, I thought Alonzo most your friend,
And that he lost the master in that name.
Zan. Hear then. 'Tis twice three years since that great man,
Great let me call him, for he conquered me,
Made me the captive of his arm in fight.
He slew my father, and threw chains o'er me,
While I with pious rage pursued revenge.
I then was young, he placed me near his person,
And thought me not dishonoured by his service.
One day, may that returning day be night,
The stain, the curse of each succeeding year!
For something, or for nothing, in his pride
He struck me. While I tell it, do I live?
He smote me on the cheek——I did not stab him;
For that were poor revenge——e'er since, his folly
Has strove to bury it beneath a heap
Of kindnesses, and thinks it is forgot.
Insolent thought! and like a second blow!
Affronts are innocent, where men are worthless;
And such alone can wisely drop revenge.
Isa. But with more temper, Zanga, tell your story,
To see your strong emotions startles me.
Zan. Yes, woman, with the temper that befits it.
Has the dark adder venom? so have I
When trod upon. Proud Spaniard, thou shalt feel me!
For from that day, that day of my dishonour,
I from that day have curst the rising sun,
Which never failed to tell me of my shame.
I from that day have blest the coming night,
Which promised to conceal it; but in vain;
The blow returned for ever in my dream.
Yet on I toiled, and groaned for an occasion
Of ample vengeance; none is yet arrived.
Howe'er, at present I conceive warm hopes
Of what may wound him sore, in his ambition,
Life of his life, and dearer than his soul.
By nightly march he purposed to surprise
The Moorish camp; but I have taken care
They shall be ready to receive his favour,
Failing in this, a cast of utmost moment,
Would darken all the conquests he has won.
Isa. Just as I entered an express arrived.
Zan. To whom?
Isa. His friend, Don Carlos.
Zan. Be propitious,
Oh, Mahomet, on this important hour,
And give at length my famished soul revenge!
What is revenge, but courage to call in
Our honour's debts, "and wisdom to convert
Other's self-love into our own protection?"
But see, the morning dawns;
I'll seek Don Carlos and inquire my fate.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II—THE PALACE.

Enter DON MANUAL and DON CARLOS.

Man. My Lord, Don Carlos, what brings your express?
Car. Alonzo's glory, and the Moors' defeat.
The field is strewed with twice ten thousand slain.
Though he suspects his measures were betrayed.
He 'll soon arrive. Oh, how I long to embrace
The first of heroes, and the best of friends!
I loved fair Leonora long before
The chance of battle gave me to the Moors.

From whom so late Alonzo set me free;
And while I groaned in bondage, I deputed
This great Alonzo, whom her father honours,
To be my gentle advocate in love,
To stir her heart, and fan its fires for me.
Man. And what success?
Car. Alas, the cruel maid——
Indeed her father, who, though high at court,
And powerful with the king, has wealth at heart
To heal his devastation from the Moors,
Knowing I 'm richly freighted from the east,
My fleet now sailing in the sight of Spain,
Heaven guard it safe through such a dreadful storm;
Caresses me, and urges her to wed.
Man. Her aged father, see,
Leads her this way.
Car. She looks like radiant truth,
Brought forward by the hand of hoary time——
You to the port with speed, 'tis possible
Some vessel is arrived. Heaven grant it bring
Tidings which Carlos may receive with joy!

Enter DON ALVAREZ and LEONORA.

Alv. Don Carlos, I am labouring in your favour
With all a parent's soft authority,
And earnest counsel.
Car. Angels second you!
For all my bliss or misery hangs on it.
Alv. Daughter, the happiness of life depends
On our discretion, and a prudent choice;
Look into those they call unfortunate,
And closer viewed, you 'll find they are unwise:
Some flaw in their own conduct lies beneath,
And 'tis the trick of fools to save their credit,
Which brought another language into use.
Don Carlos is of ancient, noble blood,
And then his wealth might mend a prince's fortune.
For him the sun is labouring in the mines,
A faithful slave, and turning earth to gold.
His keels are freighted with that sacred power,
By which even kings and emperors are made.
Sir, you have my good wishes, and I hope (*to Car.*)
My daughter is not indisposed to hear you. [*Exit.*
Car. Oh, Leonora! why art thou in tears?
Because I am less wretched than I was?
Before your father gave me leave to woo you,
Hushed was your bosom, and your eye serene.
Will you for ever help me to new pains,
And keep reserves of torment in your hand,
To let them loose on every dawn of joy?
Leon. Think you my father too indulgent to me,
That he claims no dominion o'er my tears?
A daughter sure may be right dutiful,
Whose tears alone are free from a restraint.
Car. Ah, my torn heart!
Leon. Regard not me, my Lord,
I shall obey my father.
Car. Disobey him,
Rather than come thus coldly, than come thus
With absent eyes and alienated mien,
Suffering address, the victim of my love.
Oh, let me be undone the common way,
And have the common comfort to be pitied,
And not be ruined in the mask of bliss,
And so be envied, and be wretched too!
Love calls for love. Not all the pride of beauty,
Those eyes that tell us what the sun is made of,
Those lips, whose touch is to be bought with life,
Those hills of driven snow, which seen are felt;
All these possessed, are nought, but as they are
The proof, the substance of an inward passion,
And the rich plunder of a taken heart.
Leon. Alas, my lord, we are too delicate;
And when we grasp the happiness we wished,
We call on wit to argue it away:
A plainer man would not feel half your pains:
But some have too much wisdom to be happy.
Car. Had I known this before, it had been well:
I had not then solicited your father
To add to my distress; as you behave,
Your father's kindness stabs me to the heart.
Give me your hand——nay, give it, Leonora:
You give it not—nay, yet you give it not——
I ravish it.
Leon. I pray, my Lord, no more.
Car. Ah, why so sad? you know each sigh does shake me:
Sighs there, are tempests here.——
I 've heard, bad men would be unblest in heaven:
What is my guilt, that makes me so with you?"
Have I not languished prostrate at thy feet?
Have I not lived whole days upon thy sight?
Have I not seen thee where thou hast not been?
And, mad with the idea, clasped the wind
And doated upon nothing?
Leon. Court me not,
Good Carlos, by recounting of my faults,
And telling how ungrateful I have been.
Alas, my lord, if talking would prevail,
I could suggest much better arguments
Than those regards you threw away on me;
Your valour, honour, wisdom, praised by all.
But bid physicians talk our veins to temper,
And with an argument new-set a pulse;
Then think, my Lord, of reasoning into love.
Car. Must I despair then? do not shake me thus:
My temper-beaten heart is cold to death.
Ah, turn, and let me warm me in thy beauties.
Heavens! what proof I gave, but two nights past,
Of matchless love! to fling me at thy feet,
I slighted friendship, and I flew from fame;
Nor heard the summons of the next day's battle.
But darting headlong to thy arms, I left
The promised fight, I left Alonzo too,
To stand the war and quell a world alone.
(*Trumpets.*)

Leon. The victor comes. My lord, I must withdraw.
Car. And must you go?
Leon. Why should you wish me stay?
Your friend's arrival will bring comfort to you,
My presence none; it pains you and myself;
For both our sakes permit me to withdraw. [*Exit.*
Car. Sure, there's no peril but in love. Oh, how
My foes would boast to see me look so pale.

Enter DON ALONZO.

Car. Alonzo!
Alon. Carlos!——I am whole again;
Clasped in thy arms, it makes my heart entire.
Car. Whom dare I thus embrace? the conqueror
Of Afric.
Alon. Yes, much more—Don Carlos' friend.
The conquest of the world would cost me dear,
Should it beget one thought of distance in thee.
I rise in virtues to come nearer to thee.
I conquer with Don Carlos in my eye,
And thus I claim my victory's reward.
(*embracing him.*)
Car. A victory indeed! your godlike arm
Has made one spot the grave of Africa;
Such numbers fell! and the survivors fled
As frighted passengers from off the strand,
When the tempestuous sea comes roaring on them.
Alon. 'Twas Carlos conquered, 'twas his cruel chains
Inflamed me to a rage unknown before,
And threw my former actions far behind.
Car. I love fair Leonora. How I love her!
Yet still I find, I know not how it is,
Another heart, another soul for thee.
Thy friendship warms, it raises, it transports
Like music, pure the joy, without allay,
Whose very rapture is tranquillity:
But love, like wine, gives a tumultuous bliss,
Heightened indeed beyond all mortal pleasures;
But mingles pangs and madness in the bowl.

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. Manuel, my lord, returning from the port,
On business both of moment and of haste,
Humbly begs leave to speak in private with you.
Car. In private! ha! Alonzo, I'll return;
No business can detain me long from thee. [*exit.*
Zan. My lord Alonzo, I obeyed your orders.
Alon. Will the fair Leonora pass this way?
Zan. She will, my lord, and soon.
Alon. Come near me, Zanga;
For I dare to open all my heart to thee.
Never was such a day of triumph known.
There 's not a wounded captive in my train,
That slowly followed my proud chariot wheels,
With half a life, and beggary, and chains,
But is a god to me: I am most wretched.——
In his captivity, thou know'st, Don Carlos,
My friend, and never was a friend more dear,
Deputed me his advocate in love,
To talk to Leonora's heart, and make
A tender party in her thoughts for him.
What did I do?—I loved myself. Indeed,
One thing there is might lessen my offence,
If such offence admits of being lessened,
I thought him dead; for, by what fate I know not,
His letters never reached me.
Zan. Thanks to Zanga,
Who thence contrived, that evil which has happened. [*aside*]
Alon. Yes, curst of heaven! I loved myself, and now,
In a late action, rescued from the Moors,
I have brought home my rival in my friend.
Zan. We hear, my lord, that in that action too,
Your interposing arm preserved his life.
Alon. It did—with more than the expense of mine;
For, oh, this day is mentioned for their nuptials.
But see, she comes—I'll take my leave, and die.
Zan. Had'st thou a thousand lives, thy death would please me.
Unhappy fate! my country overcome!
My six years hope of vengeance quite expired!——
Would nature were——I will not fall alone:
But others' groans shall tell the world my death.
[*aside and exit.*

Enter LEONORA.

Alon. When nature ends with anguish like to this,
Sinners shall take their last leave of the sun,
And bid his light adieu.
Leon. The mighty conqueror
Dismayed! I thought you gave the foe your sorrows.
Alon. Oh, cruel insult! are those tears your sport,
Which nothing but a love for you could draw?
Afric I quelled, in hope by that to purchase
Your leave to sigh unscorned; but I complain not;
'Twas but a world, and you are—Leonora.
Leon. That passion which you boast of is your guilt,
A treason to your friend. You think mean of me,
To plead your crimes as motives of my love.
Alon. You, madam, ought to thank those crimes you blame:
'Tis they permit you to be thus inhuman,
Without the censure both of earth and heaven——
I fondly thought a last look might be kind.
Farewell, for ever.——This severe behaviour
Has, to my comfort, made it sweet to die.
Leon. Farewell, for ever!—sweet to die!—oh, heaven! [*aside*]
Alonzo, stay; you must not thus escape me:
But hear your guilt at large.

Alon. Oh, Leonora!
What could I do? in duty to my friend,
I saw you; and to see is to admire.
For Carlos did I plead, and most sincerely.
Witness the thousand agonies it cost me.
You know I did. I sought but your esteem;
If that is guilt, an angel had been guilty.
"I often sighed, nay, wept, but could not help it:
And sure it is no crime to be in pain.
But grant my crime was great; I'm greatly curst;
What would you more? am I not most undone?
This usage is like stamping on the murdered,
When life is fled; most barbarous and unjust.
Leon. If from your guilt none suffered but yourself,
't might be so——farewell. [*going*]
Alon. Who suffers with me?
Leon. Enjoy your ignorance, and let me go.
Alon. Alas! what is there I can fear to know,
Since I already know your hate? your actions
Have long since told me that.
Leon. They flattered you.
Alon. How flattered me?
Leon. Oh, search in fate no farther!
I hate thee—oh, Alonzo! how I hate thee!
Alon. Indeed! and do you weep for hatred too!
Oh, what a doubtful torment heaves my heart!
I hope it most, and yet I dread it more.
Should it be so—should her tears flow from thence;
How would my soul blaze up in ecstacy!
Ah, no! how sink into the depth of horrors!
Leon. Why would you force my stay?
Alon. What mean these tears?
Leon. I weep by chance: nor have my tears a meaning.
But, oh, when first I saw Alonzo's tears,
I knew their meaning well.
[*Alonzo falls passionately on his knees, and kisses her hand.*]
Alon. Heavens! what is this? that excellence, for which
Desire was planted in the heart of man;
Virtue's supreme reward on this side heaven;
The cordial of my soul; and this destroys me——
Indeed, I flattered me that thou did'st hate.
Leon. Alonzo, pardon me the injury
Of loving you. I struggled with my passion,
And struggled long: let that be some excuse.
Alon. Unkind! you know I think your love a blessing
Beyond all human blessings: 'tis the price
Of sighs and groans, and a whole year of dying.
But, oh the curse of curses!——oh, my friend!——
Leon. Alas!
Alon. What says my love? speak, Leonora.
Leon. Was it for you, my lord, to be so quick
In finding out objections to our love?
Think you so strong my love, or weak my virtue,
t was unsafe to leave that part to me
Alon. Is not the day then fixed for your espousals?
Leon. Indeed my father once had thought that way:
But marking how the marriage pained my heart,
Long he stood doubtful; but at last resolved,
Your counsel, which determines him in all,
Should finish the debate.
Alon. Oh, agony!
Must I not only lose her, but be made
Myself the instrument? not only die,
But plunge the dagger in my heart myself?
This is refining on calamity.
Leon. What, do you tremble lest you should be mine?
For what else can you tremble? not for that
My father places in your power to alter.
Alon. What's in my power? oh, yes, to stab my friend!
Leon. To stab your friend were barbarous indeed!
Spare him—and murder me. I own, Alonzo,
You well may wonder at such words as these;
I start at them myself; they fright my nature.
Great is my fault; but blame not me alone;
Give him a little blame who took such pains
To make me guilty.
Alon. Torment!
Leon. [*after a pause*] Oh, my shame!
I sue, and sue in vain: it is most just,
When women sue, they sue to be denied.
You hate me, you despise me! you do well;
For what I've done I hate and scorn myself.
Oh, night, fall on me! I shall blush to death.
Alon. First perish all!
Leon. Say, what have you resolved?
My father comes; what answer will you give him?
Alon. What answer? let me look upon that face,
And read it there.—Devote thee to another!
Not to be borne! a second look undoes me.
Leon. And why undo you? is it then, my lord,
So terrible to yield to your own wishes,
Because they happen to concur with mine?
Cruel! to take such pains to win a heart,
Which you was conscious you must break with parting.
Alon. No, Leonora, I am thine for ever.
[*runs and embraces her.*
In spite of Carlos—ha! who's that? my friend?
[*starts wide from her.*
Alas! I see him pale! I hear his groan!
He foams, he tears his hair, he raves, he bleeds,
I know him by myself, he dies distracted!
Leon. How dreadful to be cut from what we love!
Alon. Ah, speak no more!
Leon. And tied to what we hate!
Alon. Oh!
Leon. Is it possible?
Alon. Death!
Leon. Can you?
Alon. Oh———

Yes, take a limb; but let my virtue 'scape.
Alas, my soul, this moment I die for thee!
[*breaks away.*
Leon. And are you perjured then for virtue's sake?
How often have you sworn!—but go, for ever.
[*swoons.*
Alon. Heart of my heart, and essence of my joy!
Where art thou? oh, I am thine, and thine for ever!
The groans of friendship shall be heard no more.
For whatsoever crime I can commit,
I've felt the pains already.
Leon. Hold, Alonzo,
And hear a maid whom doubly thou hast conquered.
I love thy virtue as I love thy person,
And I adore thee for the pains it gave me;
But as I felt the pains, I'll reap the fruit;
I'll shine out in my turn, and show the world
Thy great example was not lost upon me.
Be it enough that I have once been guilty;
In sight of such a pattern, to persist,
Ill suits a person honoured with your love.
My other titles to that bliss are weak;
I must deserve it by refusing it.
Thus then I tear me from thy hopes for ever.
Shall I contribute to Alonzo's crime?
No, though the life blood gushes from my heart,
You shall not be ashamed of Leonora;
Or that late time may put our names together.
Nay, never shrink; take back the bright example
You lately lent; oh, take it while you may,
While I can give it you, and be immortal. [*exit.*
Alon. She's gone, and I shall see her face no more;—
But pine in absence, and till death adore.
When with cold dew my fainting brow is hung,
And my eyes darken, from my faltering tongue
Her name will tremble with a feeble moan,
And love with fate divide my dying groan. [*exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I—CONTINUES.

Enter DON MANUEL and ZANGA.

Zan. If this be true, I can not blame your pain
For wretched Carlos; 'tis but humane in you.
But when arrived your dismal news?
Man. This hour.
Zan. What, not a vessel saved?
Man. All, all the storm
Devoured; and now o'er his late envied fortune
The dolphins bound, and watery mountains roar,
Triumphant in his ruin.
Zan. Is Alvarez
Determined to deny his daughter to him?
That treasure was on shore; must that too join
The common wreck?
Man. Alvarez pleads, indeed,
That Leonora's heart is disinclined,
And pleads that only; so it was this morning,
When he concurred; the tempest broke the match,
And sunk his favour, when it sunk the gold.
The love of gold is double in his heart.
The voice of age, and of Alvarez too.
Zan. How does Don Carlos bear it?
Man. Like a man
Whose heart feels most a human heart can feel,
And reasons best a human heart can reason.
Zan. But is he then in absolute despair?
Man. Never to see his Leonora more.
And, quite to quench all future hope, Alvarez
Urges Alonzo to espouse his daughter
This very day; for he has learnt their loves.
Zan. Ha! was not that received with ecstacy
By Don Alonzo?
Man. Yes, at first; but soon
A damp came o'er him, it would kill his friend.
Zan. Not if his friend consented! and since now
He can't himself espouse her——
Man. Yet, to ask it
Has something shocking to a generous mind;
At least, Alonzo's spirit startles at it.
Wide is the distance between our despair,
And giving up a mistress to another.
But I must leave you. Carlos wants support
In his severe affliction. [*exit.*
Zan. Ha! it dawns!——
It rises to me like a new found world
To mariners long time distrest at sea,
Sore from a storm; and all their viands spent;
Or like the sun just rising out of chaos,
Some dregs of ancient night not quite purged off.
But, shall I finish it?——hoa Isabella!

Enter ISABELLA.

I thought of dying; better things come forward;
Vengeance is still alive; from her dark covert,
With all her snakes erect upon her crest,
She stalks in view, and fires me with her charms.
When, Isabella, arrived Don Carlos here?
Isa. Two nights ago.
Zan. That was the very night
Before the battle——memory set down that;
It has the essence of the crocodile,
Though yet but in the shell—I'll give it birth.
What time did he return?
Isa. At midnight.
Zan. So————
Say, did he see that night his Leonora?
Isa. No, my good lord.
Zan. No matter——tell me, woman,
Is not Alonzo rather brave than cautious?
Honest than subtle, above fraud himself,
Slow, therefore, to suspect it in another?
Isa. You best can judge; but so the world thinks of him

Zan. Why, that was well—go fetch my tables hither. [*Exit Isa.*
Two nights ago my father's sacred shade
Thrice stalked around my bed, and smiled upon me,
He smiled a joy then little understood—
It must be so—and if so, it is vengeance
Worth waking of the dead for.

Re-enter ISABELLA with the tables—ZANGA writes, then reads as to himself.

Thus it stands——
The father's fixt——Don Carlos can not wed——
Alonzo may—but that will hurt his friend——
Nor can he ask his leave—or, if he did,
He might not gain it—it is hard to give
Our consent to ills, though we must bear them.
Were it not then a master-piece, worth all
The wisdom I can boast, first to persuade
Alonzo to request it of his friend,
His friend to grant—then from that very grant,
The strongest proof of friendship man can give,
And other motives, to work out a cause
Of jealousy, to rack Alonzo's peace?
I have turned o'er the catalogue of human woes,
Which sting the heart of man, and find none equal.
It is the hydra of calamities,
The seven-fold death! the jealous are the damned.
Oh, jealousy, each other passion's calm
To thee, thou conflagration of the soul!
Thou king of torments, thou grand counterpoise
For all the transports beauty can inspire!
Isa. Alonzo comes this way.
Zan. Most opportunely.
Withdraw. (*Exit Isa.*) "Ye subtle demons, which reside
In courts, and do your work with bows and smiles,
That little enginery, more mischievous
Than fleets and armies, and the cannon's murder,
Teach me to look a lie; give me your maze
Of gloomy thought and intricate design,
To catch the man I hate, and then devour."

Enter DON ALONZO.

My lord, I give you joy.
Alon. Of what, good Zanga?
Zan. Is not the lovely Leonora yours?
Alon. What will become of Carlos?
Zan. He's your friend;
And since he can't espouse the fair himself,
Will take some comfort from Alonzo's fortune.
Alon. Alas, thou little know'st the force of love!
Love reigns a sultan with unrivalled sway;
Puts all relations, friendship's self to death,
If once he's jealous of it. I love Carlos;
Yet well I know what pangs I felt this morning,
At his intended nuptials. For myself
I then felt pains which now for him I feel.
Zan. You will not wed her then?
Alon. Not instantly.
Insult his broken heart the very moment!
Zan. I understand you: but you'll wed her hereafter,
When your friend's gone, and his first pain assuaged.
Alon. Am I to blame in that?
Zan. My lord, I love
Your very errors: they are born from virtue.
Your friendship, and what nobler passion claims
The heart? does lead you blindfold to your ruin.
Consider, wherefore did Alvarez break
Don Carlos' match, and wherefore urge Alonzo's?
'Twas the same cause, the love of wealth. To-morrow
May see Alonzo in Don Carlos' fortune;
A higher bidder is a better friend,
And there are princes sigh for Leonora.
When your friend's gone, you'll wed; why, when the cause
Which gives you Leonora now will cease.
Carlos has lost her; should you lose her too,
Why, then you heap new torments on your friend,
By that respect which laboured to relieve him—
'Tis well he is disturbed; it makes him pause.
(*aside.*)
Alon. Think'st thou, my Zanga, should I ask Don Carlos,
His goodness would consent that I should wed her?
Zan. I know it would.
Alon. But then the cruelty
To ask it, and for me to ask it of him!
Zan. Methinks you are severe upon your friend.
Who was it gave him liberty and life?
Alon. That is the very reason which forbids it.
Were I a stranger I could freely speak:
In me it so resembles a demand,
Exacting of a debt, it shocks my nature.
Zan. My lord, you know the sad alternative.
Is Leonora worth one pang or not?
It hurts not me, my lord, but as I love you:
Warmly as you I wish Don Carlos well;
But I am likewise Don Alonzo's friend:
There all the difference lies between us two.
In me, my lord, you hear another self:
And, give me leave to add, a better too,
Cleared from these errors, which, though caused by virtue,
Are such as may hereafter give you pain——
Don Lopez of Castile would not demur thus.
Alon. Perish the name! what, sacrifice the fair
To age and ugliness, because set in gold?
I'll to Don Carlos, if my heart will let me.
I have not seen him since his sore affliction;
But shunned it, as too terrible to bear;
How shall I bear it now? I'm struck already.
[*Exit*

Zan. Half of my work is done. I must secure
Don Carlos, ere Alonzo speak with him.
[*He gives a message to a servant, then returns*]
Proud hated Spain, oft drenched in Moorish blood!
Dost thou not feel a deadly foe within thee?
Shake not the towers where'er I pass along.
Conscious of ruin, and their great destroyer?
Shake to the centre if Alonzo's dear.
Look down, oh holy Prophet! see me torture
This Christian dog, this infidel, which dares
To smite thy votaries, and spurn thy law;
And yet hopes pleasure from two radiant eyes,
Which look as they were lighted up for thee!
Shall he enjoy thy paradise below?
Blast the bold thought, and curse him with her charms!
But see, the melancholy lover comes.

Enter DON CARLOS.

Car. Hope, thou hast told me lies from day to day,
For more than twenty years; vile promiser!
None here are happy, but the very fool,
Or very wise: and I wasn't fool enough
To smile in vanities, and hug a shadow;
Nor have I wisdom to elaborate
An artificial happiness from pains:
Even joys are pains, because they can not last.
[*sighs*]
Yet much is talked of bliss: it is the art
Of such as have the world in their possession,
To give it a good name that fools may envy:
For envy to small minds is flattery."
How many lift the head, look gay, and smile
Against their consciences? and this we know,
Yet knowing, disbelieve, and try again
What we have tried, and struggle with conviction.
Each new experience gives the former credit;
And reverend gray threescore is but a voucher,
That thirty told us true.

Zan. My noble lord,
I mourn your fate: but are no hopes surviving?

Car. No hopes. Alvarez has a heart of steel.
'Tis fixt—'tis past—'tis absolute despair!

Zan. You wanted not to have your heart made tender,
By your own pains, to feel a friend's distress.

Car. I understand you well. Alonzo loves;
I pity him.

Zan. I dare be sworn you do.
Yet he has other thoughts.

Car. What can'st thou mean?

Zan. Indeed he has; and fears to ask a favour
A stranger from a stranger might request;
What costs you nothing, yet is all to him:
Nay, what indeed will to your glory add,
For nothing more than wishing your friend well.

Car. I pray be plain; his happiness is mine.

Zan. He loves to death; but so reveres his friend,
He can't persuade his heart to wed the maid
Without your leave, and that he fears to ask.
In perfect tenderness I urged him to it.
Knowing the deadly sickness of his heart,
Your overflowing goodness to your friend,
Your wisdom, and despair yourself to wed her,
I wrung a promise from him he would try:
And now I come, a mutual friend to both,
Without his privacy to let you know it,
And to prepare you kindly to receive him.

Car. Ha! if he weds I am undone indeed:
Not Don Alvarez' self can relieve me.

Zan. Alas, my lord, you know his heart is steel;
'Tis fixt, 'tis past, 'tis absolute despair.

Car. Oh, cruel heaven! and is it not enough
That I must never, never see her more?
Say, is it not enough that I must die;
But I must be tormented in the grave?—
Ask my consent! must I then give her to him?
Lead to his nuptial sheets the blushing maid?
Oh!——Leonora! never, never, never!

Zan. A storm of plagues upon him! he refuses.
[*aside.*

Car. What, wed her!—and to-day!

Zan. To-day, or never.
To-morrow may some wealthier lover bring,
And then Alonzo is thrown out like you;
Then whom shall he condemn for his misfortune?
Carlos is an Alvarez to his love.

Car. Oh, torment! whither shall I turn?

Zan. To peace.

Car. Which is the way?

Zan. His happiness is yours——
I dare not disbelieve you.

Car. Kill my friend!
Or worse——alas! and can there be a worse?
A worse there is; nor can my nature bear it.

Zan. You have convinced me 'tis a dreadful task.
I find Alonzo's quitting her this morning
For Carlos' sake, in tenderness to you,
Betrayed me to believe it less severe
Than I perceive it is.

Car. Thou dost upbraid me?

Zan. No, my good lord; but since you can't comply,
'Tis my misfortune that I mentioned it;
For had I not, Alonzo would indeed
Have died, as now, but not by your decree.

Car. By my decree! do I decree his death?
I do——shall I then lead her to his arms?
Oh, which side shall I take? be stabbed, or stab;
'Tis equal death! a choice of agonies!
Ah, no!—all other agonies are ease
To one——oh, Leonora! never, never!
Go, Zanga, go, defer the dreadful trial,
Though but a day, something, perchance, may happen
To soften all to friendship and to love.

Go, stop my friend, let me not see him now;
But save us from an interview of death.
Zan. My lord, I'm bound in duty to obey you—
If I do not bring him, may Alonzo prosper.
[*aside and exit.*
Car. What is this world?—thy school, oh, misery!
Our only lesson is to learn to suffer;
And he who knows not that, was born for nothing.
Though deep my pangs, and heavy at my heart,
My comfort is, each moment takes away
A grain, at least, from the dead load that's on me,
And gives a nearer prospect of the grave.
But put it most severely—should I live——
Live long——alas, there is no length in time!
Nor in thy time, oh, man!—what's fourscore years?
Nay, what, indeed, the age of time itself,
Since cut out from Eternity's wide round!
Away, then, to a mind resolved and wise,
There is an impotence in misery,
Which makes me smile, when all its shafts are in me.
Yet Leonora——she can make time long,
Its nature alter, as she altered mine.
While in the lustre of her charms I lay,
Whole summer suns roll unperceived away;
I years for days, and days for moments told,
And was surprized to hear that I grew old.
Now fate does rigidly its dues regain,
And every moment is an age of pain.

As he is going out, enter ZANGA and DON ALONZO. ZANGA stops DON CARLOS.

Zan. Is this Don Carlos? this the boasted friend?
How can you turn your back upon his sadness?
Look on him, and then leave him if you can.
Whose sorrows thus depress him? not his own;
This moment he could wed without your leave,
Car. I can not yield; nor can I bear his griefs.
Alonzo! [*going to him and taking his hand.*]
Alon. Oh, Carlos!
Car. Pray, forbear.
Alon. Art thou undone, and shall Alonzo smile?
Alonzo, who perhaps, in some degree
Contributed to cause thy dreadful fate?
I was deputed guardian of thy love;
But, oh, I loved myself! pour down afflictions
On this devoted head; make me your mark;
And be the world by my example taught,
How sacred it should hold the name of friend.
Car. You charge yourself unjustly: well I know
The only cause of my severe affliction.
Alvarez, curst Alvarez!—so much anguish
Felt for so small a failure, is one merit
Which faultless virtue wants. The crime was mine,
Who placed thee there, where only thou could'st fail:
Though well I knew that dreadful post of honour
I gave thee to maintain. Ah! who could bear
Those eyes unhurt? the wounds myself have felt;
Which wounds alone should cause me to condemn thee,
They plead in thy excuse; for I too strove
To shun those fires, and found 'twas not in man.
Alon. You cast in shades the failure of a friend,
And soften all; but think not you deceive me;
I know my guilt, and I implore your pardon,
As the sole glimpse I can obtain of peace.
Car. Pardon for him, who but this morning threw
Fair Leonora from his heart all bathed
In ceaseless tears, and blushing for her love!
Who, like a rose-leaf wet with morning dew,
Would have stuck close, and clung for ever there!
But 'twas in thee, through fondness for thy friend,
To shut thy bosom against ecstacies;
For which, while this pulse beats, it beats to thee:
While this blood flows, it flows for my Alonzo,
And every wish is leveled at thy joy.
Zan. [*to Alonzo*] My lord, my lord, this is your time to speak.
Alon. [*to Zanga*] Because he's kind? it therefore is the worst;
For 'tis his kindness which I fear to hurt.
Shall the same moment see him sink in woes,
And me providing for a flood of joys,
Rich in the plunder of his happiness?
No, I may die; but I can never speak.
Car. Now, now it comes; they are concerting it:
The first word strikes me dead—oh, Leonora!
And shall another taste her fragrant breath?
Who knows what after-time may bring to pass?
Fathers may change, and I may wed her still.
[*aside*]
Alon. [*to Zanga*] Do I not see him quite possessed with anguish,
Which, like a demon, writhes him to and fro;
And shall I pour in new? no fond desire,
No love: one pang at parting, and farewell.
I have no other love but Carlos now.
Car. Alas, my friend, why with such eager grasp
Dost press my hand, and weep upon my cheek?
Alon. If, after death our forms, as some believe,
Shall be transparent, naked every thought,
And friends meet friends, and read each other's hearts,
Thou'lt know one day that thou wast held most dear.
Farewell.
Car. Alonzo, stay—he can not speak—[*holds him*]
Lest it should grieve me—shall I be outdone?
And lose in glory, as I lose in love? [*aside*]
I take it much unkindly, my Alonzo,
You think so meanly of me, not to speak,
When well I know your heart is near to bursting.
Have you forgot how you have bound me to you?
Your smallest friendship's liberty and life.

Alon. There, there it is, my friend, it cuts me there.
How dreadful it is to a generous mind
To ask, when sure he can not be denied!
Car. How greatly thought! in all he towers above me. [*aside*]
Then you confess you would ask something of me?
Alon. No, on my soul.
Zan. [*to Alonzo*] Then lose her.
Car. Glorious spirit!
Why, what a pang has he run through for this!
By heaven, I envy him his agonies.
Why, was not mine the most illustrious lot,
Of starting at one action from below,
And flaming up into consummate greatness?
Ha! angels strengthen me!—it shall be so—
I can't want strength. Great actions, once conceived,
Strengthen like wine, and animate the soul,
And call themselves to being. [*aside*] My Alonzo,
Since thy great soul disdains to make request,
Receive with favour that I make to thee.
Alon. What means my Carlos?
Car. Pray observe me well.
Fate and Alvarez tore her from my heart,
And plucking up my love, they had well nigh
Plucked up life too, for they were twined together.
Of that no more—what now does reason bid?
I can not wed—farewell my happiness!
But, O, my soul, with care provide for hers!
In life how weak, how helpless is woman!
Soon hurt; in happiness itself unsafe,
And often wounded while she plucks the rose;
So properly the object of affliction,
That heaven is pleased to make distress become her,
And dresses her most amiably in tears.
Take then my heart in dowry with the fair,
Be thou her guardian, and thou must be mine,
Shut out the thousand pressing ills of life
With thy surrounding arms—do this, and then
Set down the liberty and life thou gavest me,
As little things, as essays of thy goodness,
And rudiments of friendship so divine.
Alon. There is a grandeur in thy goodness to me,
Which with thy foes would render thee adored.
But have a care, nor think I can be pleased
With any thing that lays in pains for thee.
Thou dost dissemble, and thy heart's in tears.
Car. My heart's in health, my spirits dance their round,
And at my eyes pleasure looks out in smiles.
Alon. And canst thou, canst thou part with Leonora?
Car. I do not part with her, I give her thee.
Alon. O, Carlos!
Car. Don't disturb me, I'm sincere,
Nor is it more than simple justice in me.
This morn didst thou resign her for my sake;
I but perform a virtue learnt from thee;
Discharge a debt, and pay her to thy wishes.
Alon. Ah, how? but think not words were ever made
For such occasions. Silence, tears, embraces,
Are languid eloquence; I'll seek relief
In absence from the pain of so much goodness,
There thank the blest above, thy sole superiors,
Adore, and raise my thoughts of them by thee.
[*exit.*
Zan. Thus far success has crowned my boldest hope.
My next care is to hasten these new nuptials,
And then my master-work begins to play. [*aside*]
Why this was greatly done, without one sigh,
[*to Car.*]
To carry such a glory to its period.
Car. Too soon thou praisest me. He's gone, and now
I must unsluice my overburthened heart,
And let it flow. I would not grieve my friend
With tears, nor interrupt my great design;
Great sure as ever human breast durst think of.
But now my sorrows, long with pain suppressed,
Burst their confinement with impetuous sway,
O'er-swell all bounds, and bear e'en life away,
So till the day was won, the Greek renowned
With anguish wore the arrow in his wound,
Then drew the shaft from out his tortured side,
Let gush the torrent of his blood, and died.
[*exeunt.*

ACT III.

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. O joy, thou welcome stranger! twice three years
I have not felt thy vital beam; but now
It warms my veins, and plays around my heart
A fiery instinct lifts me from the ground,
And I could mount——the spirits numberless
Of my dear countrymen, which yesterday
Left their poor bleeding bodies on the field,
Are all assembled here, and o'er-inform me.
O, bridegroom! great indeed thy present bliss;
Yet e'en by me unenvied; for be sure
It is thy last, thy last smile, that which now
Sits on thy cheek; enjoy it while thou mayest;
Anguish, and groans, and death, bespeak to-morrow.

Enter ISABELLA.

My Isabella!
Isa. What commands, my Moor?
Zan. My fair ally! my lovely minister!
'Twas well Alvarez, by my arts impelled,
To plunge Don Carlos in the last despair
And so prevent all future molestation.

Finished the nuptials soon as he resolved them;
This conduct ripened all for me, and ruin.
Scarce had the priest the holy rite performed,
When I, by sacred inspiration, forged
That letter, which I trusted to thy hand;
That letter, which in glowing terms conveys,
From happy Carlos, to fair Leonora,
The most profound acknowledgment of heart,
For wondrous transports which he never knew.
This is a good subservient artifice,
To aid the nobler workings of my brain.

Isa. I quickly dropt it in the bride's apartment,
As you commanded.

Zan. With a lucky hand;
For soon Alonzo found it; I observed him
From out my secret stand. He took it up;
But scarce was it unfolded to his sight,
When he, as if an arrow pierced his eye,
Started, and trembling, dropt it on the ground.
Pale and aghast awhile my victim stood,
Disguised a sigh or two, and puffed them from him;
Then rubbed his brow, and took it up again.
At first he looked as if he meant to read it;
But checked by rising fears, he crushed it—thus—
And thrust it, like an adder, in his bosom.

Isa. But if he read it not, it can not sting him,
At least not mortally.

Zan. At first I thought so;
But farther thought informs me otherwise,
And turns this disappointment to account.
He more shall credit it, because unseen,
If 'tis unseen, as thou anon mayest find.

Isa. That would indeed commend my Zanga's skill.

Zan. This, Isabella, is Don Carlos' picture;
Take it: and so dispose of it, that found,
It may rise up a witness of her love;
Under her pillow, in her cabinet,
Or elsewhere, as shall best promote our end.

Isa. I'll weigh it as its consequence requires,
Then do my utmost to deserve your smile. [*exit.*

Zan. Is that Alonzo prostrate on the ground?—
Now he starts up, like flames from sleeping embers,
And wild distraction glares from either eye.
If thus a slight surmise can work his soul,
How will the fulness of the tempest tear him?

Enter Don ALONZO.

Alon. And yet it can not be—I am deceived—
I injure her; she wears the face of heaven.

Zan. He doubts. [*retires.*

Alon. I dare not look on this again.
If the first glance, which gave suspicion only,
Had such effect; so smote my heart and brain,
The certainty would dash me all in pieces.
It can not—ha! it must, it must be true. [*starts.*

Zan. Hold there, and we succeed. He has descried me
And, for he thinks I love him, will unfold
His aching heart, and rest it on my counsel.
I'll seem to go, to make my stay more sure.
[*aside.*

Alon. Hold, Zanga, turn.

Zan. My lord.

Alon. Shut close the doors,
That not a spirit find an entrance here.

Zan. My lord's obeyed.

Alon. I see that thou art frighted.
If thou dost love me, I shall fill thy heart
With scorpions' stings.

Zan. If I do love, my lord?

Alon. Come near me, let me rest upon thy bosom,
What pillow like the bosom of a friend?
For I am sick at heart.

Zan. Speak, sir, O speak,
And take me from the rack.

Alon. And is there need
Of words? behold a wonder! see my tears!

Zan. I feel 'em too. Heaven grant my senses fail me!
I rather would lose them, than have this real.

Alon. Go, take a round through all things in thy thought,
And find that one, for there is only one,
Which could extort my tears; find that, and tell
Thyself my misery, and spare me the pain.

Zan. Sorrow can think but ill—I am bewildered;
I know not where I am.

Alon. Think, think, no more
It ne'er can enter in an honest heart.
I'll tell thee, then——I can not——yet I do
By wanting force to give it utterance.

Zan. Speak, ease your heart; its throbs will break your bosom.

Alon. I am most happy; mine is victory,
Mine the king's favour, mine the nation's shout,
And great men make their fortunes of my smiles.
O curse of curses! in the lap of blessing
To be most curst!——my Leonora's false!

Zan. Save me, my lord!

Alon. My Leonora's false!
[*gives him the letter.*]

Zan. Then heaven has lost its image here on earth.
[*while Zanga reads the letter, he trembles and shows the utmost concern.*]

Alon. Good-natured man! he makes my pains his own.
I durst not read it; but I read it now
In thy concern.

Zan. Did you not read it then?

Alon. Mine eye just touched it, and could bear no more.

Zan. Thus perish all that gives Alonzo pain!
[*tears the letter.*]

Alon. Why did'st thou tear it?
Zan. Think of it no more.
'Twas your mistake, and groundless are your fears.
Alon. And did'st thou tremble then for my mistake?
Or give the whole contents, or by the pangs
That feed upon my heart, thy life 's in danger.
Zan. Is this Alonzo's language to his Zanga?
Draw forth your sword, and find the secret here.
For whose sake is it, think you, I conceal it?
Wherefore this rage? because I seek your peace?
I have no interest in suppressing it,
But what good natured tenderness for you
Obliges me to have. Not mine the heart
That will be rent in two. Not mine the fame
That will be damned, though all the world should know it.
Alon. Then my worst fears are true, and life is past.
Zan. What has the rashness of my passion uttered?
I know not what; but rage is our destruction,
And all its words are wind——yet sure I think,
I nothing owned——but grant I did confess,
What is a letter? letters may be forged.
For heaven's sweet sake, my lord, lift up your heart.
Some foe to your repose——
Alon. So, heaven look on me,
As I can't find the man I have offended.
Zan. Indeed! [*aside*] our innocence is not our shield;
They take offence, who have not been offended;
They seek our ruin too, who speak us fair,
And death is often ambushed in their smiles.
"We know not whom we have to fear." 'Tis certain
A letter may be forged, and in a point
Of such a dreadful consequence as this,
One would rely on nought that might be false——
Think, have you any other cause to doubt her?
Away, you can find none. Resume your spirits;
All's well again.
Alon. O that it were!
Zan. It is;
For who would credit that, which credited,
Makes hell superfluous by superior pains,
Without such proofs as can not be withstood;
Has she not ever been to virtue trained?
Is not her fame as spotless as the sun
Her sex's envy, and the boast of Spain?
Alon. O, Zanga! it is that confounds me most,
That full in opposition to appearance——
Zan. No more, my lord, for you condemn yourself.
What is absurdity, but to believe
Against appearance!—you can't yet, I find,
Subdue your passion to your better sense;—
And, truth to tell, it does not much displease me.
'Tis fit our indiscretion should be checked
With some degree of pain.
Alon. What indiscretion?
Zan. Come, you must bear to hear your faults from me:
Had you not sent Don Carlos to the court
The night before the battle, that foul slave,
Who forged the senseless scroll which gives you pain,
Had wanted footing for his villany.
Alon. I sent him not.
Zan. Not send him!—ha!—that strikes me.
I thought he came on message to the king.
Is there another cause could justify
His shunning danger, and the promised fight?
But I perhaps may think too rigidly;
So long an absence, and impatient love——
Alon. In my confusion that had quite escaped me.
By heaven, my wounded soul does bleed afresh;—
'Tis clear as day—for Carlos is so brave,
He lives not but on fame, he hunts for danger,
And is enamoured of the face of death.
How then could he decline the next day's battle?
But for the transports!——Oh, it must be so—
Inhuman! by the loss of his own honour,
To buy the ruin of his friend!
Zan. You wrong him:
He knew not of your love.
Alon. Ha!——
Zan. That stings home. [*aside.*]
Alon. Indeed, he knew not of my treacherous love—
Proofs rise on proofs, and still the last the strongest.
The eternal law of things declares it true,
Which calls for judgment on distinguished guilt,
And loves to make our crime our punishment.
Love is my torture, love was first my crime;
For she was his, my friend's, and he, O, horror!
Confided all in me. O, sacred faith!
How dearly I abide thy violation!
Zan. Were then their loves far gone?
Alon. The father's will
There bore a total sway; and he, as soon
As news arrived that Carlos' fleet was seen
From off our coast, fired with the love of gold,
Determined, that the very sun which saw
Carlos' return, should see his daughter wed.
Zan. Indeed, my lord; then you must pardon me,
If I presume to mitigate the crime.
Consider, strong allurements soften guilt;
Long was his absence, ardent was his love,
At midnight his return, the next day destined
For his espousals—'twas strong temptation.
Alon. Temptation!
Zan. 'Twas but gaining of one night.
Alon. One night!

Zan. That crime could ne'er return again.
Alon. Again! by heaven thou dost insult thy lord.
Temptation! one night gained! O stings and death!
And am I then undone? alas, my Zanga!
And dost thou own it too? deny it still,
And rescue me one moment from distraction.
Zan. My lord, I hope the best.
Alon. False, foolish hope,
And insolent to me! thou know'st it's false;
It is as glaring as the noon-tide sun.
Devil!—this morning, after three years coldness,
To rush at once into a passion for me!
'Twas time to feign, 'twas time to get another,
When her first fool was sated with her beauties.
Zan. What says my lord? did Leonora then
Never before disclose her passion for you?
Alon. Never.
Zan. Throughout the whole three years?
Alon. O never! never!
Why, Zanga, shouldst thou strive? 'tis all in vain:
Though thy soul labours, it can find no reed
For hope to catch at. Ah! I'm plunging down
Ten thousand thousand fathoms in despair.
Zan. Hold, sir, I'll break your fall—wave every fear,
And be a man again—had he enjoyed her,
Be most assured, he had resigned her to you
With less reluctance.
Alon. Ha! resign her to me!——
Resign her!—who resign her?—double death!
How could I doubt so long? my heart is broke.
First love her to distraction! then resign her!
Zan. But was it not with utmost agony?
Alon. Grant that, he still resigned her; that's enough.
Would he pluck out his eye to give it me?
Tear out his heart?—she was his heart no more—
For was it with reluctance he resigned her;
By heaven, he asked; he courted me to wed.
I thought it strange; 'tis now no longer so.
Zan. Was't his request? are you right sure of that?
I fear the letter was not all a tale.
Alon. A tale! there's proof equivalent to sight.
Zan. I should distrust my sight on this occasion.
Alon. And so should I; by heaven, I think I should.
What! Leonora, the divine, by whom
We guessed at angels! oh! I'm all confusion.
Zan. You now are too much ruffled to think clearly.
Since bliss and horror, life and death hang on it,
Go to your chamber, there maturely weigh
Each circumstance: consider, above all,
That it is jealousy's peculiar nature
To swell small things to great; nay, out of nought
To conjure much, and then to lose its reason
Amid the hideous phantoms it has formed.
Alon. Had I ten thousand lives, I'd give them all
To be deceived. I fear 'tis doomsday with me.
And yet she seemed so pure, that I thought heaven
Borrowed her form for virtue's self to wear,
To gain her lovers with the sons of men.
O, Leonora! Leonora! [*exit.*

Enter ISABELLA.

Zan. Thus far it works auspiciously. My patient
Thrives underneath my hand in misery.
He's gone to think; that is, to be distracted.
Isa. I overheard your conference, and saw you,
To my amazement, tear the letter.
Zan. There,
There, Isabella, I out-did myself.
For tearing it, I not secure it only
In its force; but superadd a new.
For who can now the character examine
To cause a doubt, much less detect the fraud?
And after tearing it, as loth to show
The foul contents, if I should swear it now
A forgery, my lord would disbelieve me,
Nay, more, would disbelieve the more I swore.
But is the picture happily disposed of?
Isa. It is.
Zan. That's well—ah! what is well? O, pang to think!
O dire necessity! is this my province?
Whither, my soul! ah! whither art thou sunk
Beneath thy sphere? ere while, far, far above
Such little arts, dissembling, falsehoods, frauds,
The trash of villany itself, which falls
To cowards, and poor wretches wanting bread.
Does this become a soldier? this become
Whom armies followed, and a people loved?
My martial glory withers at the thought.
But great my end; and since there are no other,
These means are just, they shine with borrowed light,
Illustrious from the purpose they pursue.
And greater, sure, my merit, who, to gain
A point sublime, can such a task sustain;
To wade through ways obscene, my honour bend,
And shock my nature, to attain my end.
Late time shall wonder; that my joys will raise,
For wonder is involuntary praise. [*exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter DON ALONZO and ZANGA.

Alon. Oh, what a pain to think! when every thought,
Perplexing thought, in intricacies runs,
And reason knits the inextricable toil,
In which herself is taken! I am lost.

Poor insect that I am, I am involved,
And buried in the web myself have wrought!
One argument is balanced by another,
And reason reason meets in doubtful fight,
And proofs are countermined by equal proofs.
No more I'll bear this battle of the mind,
This inward anarchy; but find my wife,
And to her trembling heart presenting death,
Force all the secret from her.
Zan. O, forbear!
You totter on the very brink of ruin.
Alon. What dost thou mean?
Zan. That will discover all,
And kill my hopes. What can I think or do?
[*aside*]
Alon. What dost thou murmur?
Zan. Force the secret from her!
What's perjury to such a crime as this?
Will she confess it then? O, groundless hope!
But rest assured, she'll make this accusation,
Or false or true, your ruin with the king;
Such is her father's power.
Alon. No more, I care not;
Rather than groan beneath this load, I'll die.
Zan. But for what better will you change this load?
Grant you should know it, would not that be worse?
Alon. No, it would cure me of my mortal pangs;
By hatred and contempt I should despise her,
And all my love-bred agonies would vanish.
Zan. Ah! were I sure of that, my lord—
Alon. What then!
Zan. You should not hazard life to gain the secret.
Alon. What dost thou mean? thou know'st I'm on the rack.
I'll not be played with; speak, if thou hast aught,
Or I this instant fly to Leonora.
Zan. That is, to death. My lord, I am not yet
Quite so far gone in guilt to suffer it,
Though gone too far, heaven knows—'tis I am guilty
I have took pains, as you, I know, observed,
To hinder you from diving in the secret,
And turned aside your thoughts from the detection.
Alon. Thou dost confound me.
Zan. I confound myself,
And frankly own it, though to my shame I own it;
Nought but your life in danger could have torn
The secret out, and made me own my crime.
Alon. Speak quickly; Zanga, speak.
Zan. Not yet, dread sir:
First, I must be assured, that if you find
The fair one guilty, scorn, as you assured me,
Shall conquer love and rage, and heal your soul.
Alon. Oh, 'twill, by heaven.
Zan. Alas! I fear it much,
And scarce can hope so far; but I of this
Exact your solemn oath, that you'll abstain
From all self-violence, and save my lord.
Alon. I trebly swear.
Zan. You'll bear it like a man?
Alon. A god.
Zan. Such have you been to me, these tears confess it,
And poured forth miracles of kindness on me:
And what amends is now within my power,
But to confess, expose myself to justice,
And as a blessing claim my punishment?
Know then, Don Carlos——
Alon. Oh!
Zan. You can not bear it.
Alon. Go on, I'll have it, though it blast mankind;
I'll have it all, and instantly. Go on.
Zan. Don Carlos did return at dead of night—

Enter LEONORA.

Leon. My lord Alonzo, you are absent from us
And quite undo our joy.
Alon. I'll come, my love:
Be not our friends deserted by us both;
I'll follow you this moment.
Leon. My good lord,
I do observe severity of thought
Upon your brow. Aught hear you from the Moors?
Alon. No, my delight.
Leon. What then employed your mind?
Alon. Thou, love, and only thou: so heaven befriend me,
As other thought can find no entrance here.
Leon. How good in you, my lord, whom nations' cares
Solicit, and a world in arms obeys,
To drop one thought on me!
[*he shows the utmost impatience*]
Alon. Dost thou then prize it?
Leon. Do you then ask it?
Alon. Know then to thy comfort,
Thou hast me all, my throbbing heart is full
With thee alone, I've thought of nothing else;
Nor shall I, from my soul believe, till death.
My life, our friends expect thee.
Leon. I obey. [*Exit.*
Alon. Is that the face of curst hypocrisy?
If she is guilty, stars are made of darkness,
And beauty shall no more belong to heaven—
Don Carlos did return at dead of night—
Proceed, good Zanga, so thy tale began.
Zan. Don Carlos did return at dead of night;
That night, by chance, ill chance for me, did I
Command the watch that guards the palace gate.
He told me he had letters for the king,
Dispatched from you.
Alon. The villain lied!
Zan. My lord,

I pray, forbear—transported at his sight,
After so long a bondage, and your friend,
Who could suspect him of an artifice?
No farther I inquired, but let him pass,
False to my trust, at least imprudent in it.
Our watch relieved, I went into the garden,
As is my custom, when the night's serene,
And took a moon-light walk: when soon I heard
A rustling in arbour that was near me.
I saw two lovers in each other's arms,
Embracing and embraced. Anon the man
Arose and falling back some paces from her,
Gazed ardently awhile, then rushed at once,
And throwing all himself into her bosom,
There softly sighed; 'oh, night of ecstasy!
When shall we meet again?'—Don Carlos then
Led Leonora forth.

Alon. Oh, oh, my heart! [*he sinks into a chair*]

Zan. Groan on, and with the sound refresh my soul!
'Tis through his heart, his knees smite one another.
'Tis through his brain, his eye-balls roll in anguish. [*aside*]
My lord, my lord, why do you rack my soul?
Speak to me, let me know that you still live.
Do not you know me, sir? pray, look upon me:
You think too deeply—I'm your own Zanga,
So loved, so cherished, and so faithful to you.—
Why start you in such fury?—nay, my lord,
For heaven's sake sheathe your sword! what can this mean?
Fool that I was, to trust you with the secret,
And you unkind to break your word with me.
Oh, passion for a woman!—on the ground!
Where is your boasted courage? where your scorn,
And prudent rage, that was to cure your grief,
And chase your love-bred agonies away?"
Rise, sir, for honour's sake. Why should the Moors,
Why should the vanquished triumph?

Alon. Would to heaven
That I were lover still; oh, she was all!
My fame, my friendship, and my love of arms,
All stooped to her, my blood was her possession.
Deep in the secret foldings of my heart
She lived with life, and far the dearer she,
But—and—no more—set nature on a blaze,
Give her a fit of jealousy—away—
To think on't is the torment of the damned,
And not to think on't is impossible.
How fair the cheek that first alarmed my soul!
How bright the eye that set it on a flame!
How soft the breast on which I laid my peace
For years to slumber unawaked by care!
How fierce the transport! how sublime the bliss!
How deep, how black, the horror and despair!"

Zan. You said you'd bear it like a man.

Alon. I do.
Am I not almost distracted?

Zan. Pray be calm.

Alon. As hurricanes:—be thou assured of that.

Zan. Is this the wise Alonzo?

Alon. Villain, no!
He died in the arbour—he was murdered there!—
I am his demon though—my wife!—my wife!—

Zan. Alas! he weeps.

Alon. Go, dig her grave!

Zan. My lord!

Alon. But that her blood's too hot, I would carouse it
Around my bridal board!

Zan. And I would pledge thee. [*aside*]

Alon. But I may talk too fast. Pray let me think.
And reason mildly.—Wedded and undone
Before one night descends.—Oh, hasty evil!
What friend to comfort me in my extreme!
Where's Carlos? why is Carlos absent from me?
Does he know what has happened?

Zan. My good lord!

Alon. Oh, depth of horror! he!—my bosom friend!

Zan. Alas, compose yourself, my lord.

Alon. To death!
Gaze on her with both eyes so ardently!
Give them to the vultures, tear them all in pieces!

Zan. Most excellent! [*aside*]

Alon. Hark! you can keep a secret.
In yonder arbour bound with jasmine—
Who's that? what villain's that? unhand her?—murder!——
Tear them asunder——murder——how they grind
My heart betwixt them!—oh, let go my heart!
Yet let it go—'embracing and embraced!'
Oh, pestilence!—who let him in?—a traitor.
[*Goes to stab Zanga, he prevents him.*]
Alas! my head turns round, and my limbs fail me.

Zan. My lord!

Alon. Oh, villain, villain, most accurst!
If thou didst know it, why did'st let me wed?

Zan. Hear me, my lord, your anger will abate.
I knew it not:—I saw them in the garden;
But saw no more than you might well expect
To see in lovers destined for each other;
By heaven I thought their meeting innocent.
Who could suspect fair Leonora's virtue,
Till after proofs conspired to blacken it?
Sad proofs, which came too late, which broke not out.
Eternal curses on Alvarez' haste!
Till holy rites had made the wanton yours:
And then, I own, I laboured to conceal it,
In duty and compassion to your peace.

Alon. Live now, be damned hereafter—for I want thee.——
'Oh, night of ecstacy!'—ha! was't not so?
I will enjoy this murder.—Let me think—
The jasmine bower—'tis secret and remote:

Go wait me there, and take my dagger with thee.
[*Exit Zanga.*
How the sweet sound still sings within my ear!
When shall we meet again?——to-night, in hell.

As he is going, enter LEONORA.

Ha! I'm surprised! I stagger at her charms!
Oh, angel-devil!——shall I stab her now?
No it shall be as I at first determined.
To kill her now were half my vengeance lost.
Then must I now dissemble—if I can.
Leon. My lord, excuse me; see a second time
I come in embassy from all your friends,
Whose joys are languid, uninspired by you.
Alon. This moment, Leonora, I was coming
To thee, and all—but sure, or I mistake,
Or thou can'st well inspire my friends with joy.
Leon. Why sighs my lord?
Alon. I sighed not, Leonora.
Leon. I thought you did; your sighs are mine, my lord,
And shall I feel them all.
Alon. Dost flatter me?
Leon. If my regards for you are flattery,
Full far indeed I stretched the compliment
In this day's solemn rite.
Alon. What rite?
Leon. You sport me.
Alon. Indeed I do; my heart is full of mirth.
Leon. And so is mine—I look on cheerfulness
As on the health of virtue.
Alon. Virtue!—damn——
Leon. What says my lord?
Alon. Thou art exceeding fair.
Leon. Beauty alone is but of little worth;
But when the soul and body of a piece,
Both shine alike, then they obtain a price,
And are a fit reward for gallant actions,
Heaven's pay on earth for such great souls as yours;
If fair and innocent I am your due.
Alon. Innocent! [*aside.*]
Leon. How, my lord! I interrupt you.
Alon. No, my best life! I must not part with thee—
This hand is mine—oh! what a hand is here!
So soft, souls sink into it, and are lost!
Leon. In tears, my lord?
Alon. What less can speak my joy?
I gaze, and I forget my own existence;
'Tis all a vision—my head swims in heaven.
Wherefore! oh, wherefore this expense of beauty?
And wherefore, oh!——
Why, I could gaze upon thy looks for ever,
And drink in all my being from thine eyes;
And I could snatch a flaming thunderbolt,
And hurl destruction!—
Leon. How, my lord! what mean you?
Acquaint me with the secret of your heart,
Or cast me out for ever from your love.
Alon. Art thou concerned for me?
Leon. My lord you fright me.
Is this the fondness of your nuptial hour?
I am ill-used, my lord, I must not bear it.
Why, when I woo your hand, is it denied me?
Your very eyes, why are they taught to shun me?
Nay, my good lord, I have a title here
[*taking his hand.*
And I will have it. Am I not your wife?
Have I not just authority to know
That heart which I have purchased with my own?
Lay it before me then; it is my due.
Unkind Alonzo! though I might demand it;
Behold I kneel! see, Leonora kneels!
And deigns to be a beggar for her own!
Tell me the secret, I conjure you tell me.
The bride foregoes the homage of her day,
Alvarez' daughter trembles in the dust.
Speak then, I charge you speak, or I expire,
And load you with my death. My lord, my lord!
Alon. Ha, ha, ha!
[*he breaks from her, she sinks upon the floor.*
Leon. Are these the joys which fondly I conceived?
And is it thus a wedded life begins?
What did I part with, when I gave my heart?
I knew not that all happiness went with it.
Why did I leave my tender father's wing,
And venture into love! the maid that loves,
Goes out to sea upon a shattered plank,
And puts her trust in miracles for safety.
Where shall I sigh?—where pour out my complaints
He that should hear, should succour, should redress,
He is the source of all.
Alon. Go to thy chamber;
I soon will follow; that which now disturbs thee
Shall be cleared up, and thou shalt not condemn me.
[*exit Leonora.*
Oh how like innocence she looks!—what, stab her!
And rush into her blood!—I never can!
In her guilt shines, and nature holds my hand.
How then? why, thus—no more! it is determined.

Enter ZANGA

Zan. I fear his heart has failed him. She must die.
Can I not rouse the snake that's in his bosom,
To sting out human nature and effect it? [*aside.*
Alon. This vast and solid earth, that blazing sun,
Those skies through which it rolls, must all have end.
What then is man? the smallest part of nothing
Day buries day, month month, and year the year,
Our life is but a chain of many deaths;
Can then death's self be feared? our life must rather,
Life is the desert, life the solitude,

Death joins us to the great majority;
'Tis to be borne to Platos, and to Cæsars;
'Tis to be great for ever;
'Tis pleasure, 'tis ambition then to die.
Zan. I think, my lord, you talked of death.
Alon. I did.
Zan. I give you joy, then Leonora's dead.
Alon. No, Zanga, the greatest guilt is mine.
'Tis mine who might have marked his midnight visit,
Who might have marked his tameness to resign her;
Who might have marked her sudden turn of love:
These, and a thousand tokens more; and yet,
For which the saints absolve my soul! did wed.
Zan. Where does this tend?
Alon. To shed a woman's blood
Would stain my sword, and make my wars inglorious!
But just resentment to myself, bears in it
A stamp of greatness above vulgar minds.
He who, superior to the checks of nature,
Dares make his life the victim of his reason,
Does in some sort that reason deify,
And takes a sight at heaven.
Zan. Alas, my lord,
'Tis not your reason, but her beauty finds
Those arguments, and throws you on your sword.
You can not close an eye that is so bright,
You can not strike a breast that is so soft,
That has ten thousand ecstacies in store—
For Carlos?—no, my lord, I mean for you.
Alon. Oh, through my heart and marrow! pr'ythee spare me;
Nor more upbraid the weakness of thy lord.
I own, I tried, I quarrelled with my heart
And pushed it on, and bid it give her death;
But, oh, her eyes struck first, and murdered me.
Zan. I know not what to answer to my lord.
Men are but men; we did not make ourselves.
Farewell then, my best lord, since you must die.
Oh, that I were to share your monument,
And in eternal darkness close these eyes
Against those scenes which I am doomed to suffer!
Alon. What dost thou mean?
Zan. And is it then unknown?
Oh, grief of heart to think that you should ask it!
Sure you distrust that ardent love I bear you,
Else could you doubt when you are laid in dust—
But it will cut my poor heart through and through,
To see those revel on your sacred tomb,
Who brought you thither by their lawless loves.
For there they'll revel, and exult to find
Him sleep so fast, who else might mar their joys.
Alon. Distraction!—but Don Carlos well thou knowest,
Is sheathed in steel, and bent on other thoughts.
Zan. I'll work him to the murder of his friend.
Yes, till the fever of his blood returns,
While her last kiss still glows upon his cheek.
[*aside.*
But when he finds Alonzo is no more,
How will he rush like lightning to her arms!
There sigh, there languish, there pour out his soul;
But not in grief—sad obsequies to thee!
But thou wilt be at peace, nor see, nor hear
The burning kiss, the sigh of ecstacy,
Their throbbing hearts, that jostle one another;
Thank heaven, these torments will be all my own.
Alon. I'll ease thee of that pain. Let Carlos die,
O'ertake him on the road, and see it done,
'Tis my command. [*gives his signet.*
Zan. I dare not disobey.
Alon. My Zanga now, I have thy leave to die.
Zan. Ah, sir! think, think again. Are all men buried
In Carlos' grave? you know not womankind.
When once the throbbing of the heart has broke
The modest zone with which it first was tied,
Each man she meets will be a Carlos to her.
Alon. That thought has more of hell than had the former.
Another, and another, and another!
And each shall cast a smile upon my tomb.
I am convinced; I must not, will not die.
Zan. You can not die; nor can you murder her.
What then remains? in nature no third way,
But to forget, and so to love again.
Alon. Oh!
Zan. If you forgive, the world will call you good,
If you forget, the world will call you wise;
If you receive her to your grace again,
The world will call you very, very kind.
Alon. Zanga, I understand thee well. She dies,
Though my arm trembles at the stroke, she dies.
Zan. That's truly great. What think you 'twas set up
The Greek and Roman name in such a lustre,
But doing right in stern despite to nature,
Shutting their ears to all her little cries,
When great, august, and godlike justice called?
At Aulis, one poured out a daughter's life,
And gained more glory than by all his wars;
Another slew his sister in just rage;
A third; the theme of all succeeding times,
Gave to the cruel axe a darling son.
Nay more, for justice some devote themselves,
As he at Carthage, an immortal name!
Yet there is one step left above them all,
Above their history, above their fable:
A wife, bride, mistress unenjoyed—do that,
And tread upon the Greek and Roman glory.
Alon. 'Tis done!—again new transports fire my brain:
I had forgot it, 'tis my bridal night,
Friend, give me joy, we must be gay together;
See that the festival be duly honoured.

And when with garlands the full bowl is crowned,
And music gives the elevating sound,
And golden carpets spread the sacred floor,
And a new day the blazing tapers pour,
Thou, Zanga, thou my solemn friends invite,
From the dark realms of everlasting night.
Call vengeance, call the furies, call despair,
And death, our chief invited guest, be there;
He with pale hand shall lead the bride, and spread
Eternal curtains round our nuptial bed.
[*exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. O, pitiful! oh, terrible to sight!
Poor mangled shade! all covered o'er with wounds,
And so disguised with blood!—who murdered thee?
Tell thy sad tale, and thou shalt be revenged.
Ha! Carlos?—horror! Carlos?—oh, away!
Go to the grave, or let me sink to mine.
I can not bear the sight—what sight?—where am I!
There's nothing here—if this was fancy's work,
She draws a picture strongly—

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. Ha!—you're pale.
Alon. Is Carlos murdered?
Zan. I obeyed your order.
Six ruffians overtook him on the road;
He fought as he was wont, and four he slew,
Then sunk beneath an hundred wounds to death.
His last breath blest Alonzo, and desired
His bones might rest near yours.
Alon. Oh, Zanga! Zanga!
But I'll not think: for I must act, and thinking
Would ruin me for action. Oh, the medley
Of right and wrong! the chaos of my brain!
He should and should not die—you should obey
And not obey. It is a day of darkness,
Of contradictions, and of many deaths.
Where's Leonora, then? quick, answer me;
I'm deep in horrors, I'll be deeper still.
I find thy artifice did take effect,
And she forgives my late deportment to her.
Zan. I told her from your childhood you was wont
On any great surprise, but chiefly then
When cause of sorrow bore it company,
To have your passion shake the seat of reason;
A momentary ill, which soon blew o'er,
Then did I tell her of Don Carlos' death,
Wisely suppressing by what means he fell,
And laid the blame on that. At first she doubted:
But such the honest artifice I used,
And such her ardent wish it should be true,
That she, at length, was fully satisfied.
Alon. 'Twas well she was. In our late interview
My passion so far threw me from my guard,
Methinks 'tis strange that conscious of her guilt,
She saw not through its thin disguise my heart.
Zan. But what design you sir, and how?
Alon. I'll tell thee.
Thus I've ordained it. In the jas'mine bower,
The place which she dishonoured with her guilt,
There will I meet her; the appointment's made;
And calmly spread, for I can do it now,
The blackness of her crime before her sight,
And then with all the cool solemnity
Of public justice, give her to the grave. [*exit*
Zan. Why, get thee gone! horror and night go with thee.
Sisters of Acheron, go hand in hand,
Go dance around the bower, and close them in;
And tell them that I sent you to salute them.
Profane the ground, and for the ambrosial rose,
And breath of jas'mine, let hemlock blacken,
And deadly nightshade poison all the air.
For the sweet nightingale may ravens croak,
Toads pant, and adders rustle through the leaves,
May serpents winding up the trees let fall
Their hissing necks upon them from above,
And mingle kisses—such as I should give them.
[*exit.*

SCENE II.—THE BOWER—LEONORA SLEEPING.

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. Ye amaranths! ye roses like the morn!
Sweet myrtles, and ye golden orange groves!
Why do you smile? why do you look so fair?
Are ye not blasted as I enter in?
Yes, see how every flower lets fall its head
How shudders every leaf without a wind
How every green is as the ivy pale!
Did ever midnight ghosts assemble here?
Have these sweet echoes ever learned to groan?
Joy-giving, love-inspiring, holy bower!
Know, in thy fragrant bosom thou receivest
A——murderer! oh, I shall stain thy lilies,
And horror will usurp the seat of bliss.
So Lucifer broke into paradise,
And soon damnation followed. [*advances.*] Ha! she sleeps—
The day's uncommon heat has overcome her.
Then take, my longing eyes, your last full gaze.
Oh, what a sight is here! how dreadful fair!
Who would not think that being innocent?
Where shall I strike? who strikes her, strikes himself,
My own life-blood will issue at her wound.
Oh, my distracted heart! oh, cruel heaven!
To give such charms as these and then call man.

Mere man, to be your executioner.
Was it because it was too hard for you?
But see, she smiles! I never shall smile more.
It strongly tempts me to a parting kiss.
[*going, starts back.*
Ha! smile again. She dreams of him she loves.
Curse on her charms! I'll stab her through them all.
[*as he is going to strike, she wakes.*
Leon. My lord your stay was long, and yonder lull
Of falling waters tempted me to rest,
Dispirited with noon's excessive heat.
Alon. Ye powers! with what an eye she mends the day!
While they were closed I should have given the blow.
Oh, for a last embrace! and then for justice:
Thus heaven and I shall both be satisfied. [*aside.*
Leon. What says my lord?
Alon. Why this Alonzo says;
If love were endless, men were gods; 'tis tha
Does counterbalance travel, danger, pain—
'Tis heaven's expedient to make mortals bear
The light, and cheat them of the peaceful grave.
Leon. Alas, my lord! why talk you of the grave?
Your friend is dead; in friendship you sustain
A mighty loss; repair it with my love.
Alon. Thy love, thou piece of witchcraft! I would say,
Thou brightest angel! I could gaze for ever.
Where hadst thou this, enchantress, tell me where,
Which with a touch works miracles, boils up
My blood to tumults, and turns round my brain?
E'en now thou swim'st before me, I shall lose thee—
No, I will make thee sure, and clasp thee all.
Who turned this slender waist with so much art,
And shut perfection in so small a ring?
Who spread that pure expanse of white above,
On which the dazzled sight can find no rest;
But, drunk with beauty, wanders up and down.
For ever, and for ever finds new charms!
But oh, those eyes! those murderers! oh, whence,
Whence didst thou steal their burning orbs from heaven?
Thou did'st; and 'tis religion to adore them.
Leon. My best Alonzo, moderate your thoughts.
Extremes still fright me, though of love itself.
Alon. Extremes indeed! it hurried me away;
But I come home again—and now for justice—
And now for death—it is impossible—
Sure such were made by heaven guiltless to sin,
Or in their guilt to laugh at punishment.
I leave her to just heaven.
[*drops the dagger, and goes off.*
Leon. Ha, a dagger!
What dost thou say, thou minister of death?
What dreadful tale dost tell me? let me think -

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. Death to my towering hopes: oh, fall from high.
My close long-laboured scheme at once is blasted.
That dagger, found, will cause her to inquire;
Inquiry will discover all; my hopes
Of vengeance perish; I myself am lost—
Curse on the coward's heart! wither his hand
Which held the steel in vain.—What can be done?
Where can I fix?—that's something still—'twill breed
Fell rage and bitterness betwixt their souls,
Which may, perchance, grow up to greater evil;
If not, 'tis all I can—it shall be so— [*aside.*
Leon. Oh, Zanga, I am sinking in my fears!
Alonzo dropped this dagger as he left me,
And left me in a strange disorder too.
What can this mean? angels preserve his life!
Zan. Yours, madam, yours.
Leon. What, Zanga, dost thou say?
Zan. Carry your goodness, then to such extremes,
So blinded to the faults of him you love,
That you perceive not he is jealous?
Leon. Heavens!
And yet a thousand things recur that swear it.
What villain could inspire him with that thought?
It is not of the growth of his own nature.
Zan. Some villain, who, hell knows; but he is jealous,
And 'tis most fit a heart so pure as yours
Do itself justice and assert its honour,
And make him conscious of its stab of virtue.
Leon. Jealous! it sickens at my heart. Unkind,
Ungenerous, groundless weak, and insolent!
Why, wherefore, and what shadow of occasion?
'Tis fascination, 'tis the warmth of heaven
For the collected crimes of all his race.
Oh, how the great man lessens to my thought!
How could so mean a vice as jealousy,
Unnatural child of ignorance and guilt,
Which tears and feeds upon its parent's heart,
Live in a throng of such exalted virtues?
I scorn and hate, yet love him and adore.
I can not, will not, dare not think it true,
Till from himself I know it. [*exit.*
Zan. This succeeds
Just to my wish. Now she, with violence,
Upbraids him; he, well knowing she is guilty,
Rages no less; and if on either side
The waves run high, there still lives hopes of ruin.

Enter ALONZO.

My lord——
Alon. Oh, Zanga, hold thy peace! I am no coward;
But heaven itself did hold my hand; I felt it,
By the well-being of my soul, I did.
I'll think of vengeance at another season.
Zan. My lord, her guilt——
Alon. Perdition on thee, Moor,
For that one word! ah, do not rouse that thought!

I have o'erwhelmed it as much as possible:
Away, then, let us talk of other things.
I tell thee, Moor, I love her to distraction.
If 'tis my shame, why, be it so—I love her;
Nor can I help it; 'tis imposed upon me
By some superior and resistless power.
I could not hurt her to be lord of earth;
It shocks my nature like a stroke from heaven.
Angels defend her, as if innocent.
But see my Leonora comes—begone. [*exit Zanga.*

Enter LEONORA.

Oh, seen for ever, yet for ever new!
The conquered thou dost conquer o'er again,
Inflicting wound on wound.
Leon. Alas, my lord!
What need of this to me?
Alon. Ha! dost thou weep?
Leon. Have I no cause?
Alon. If love is thy concern,
Thou hast no cause: none ever loved like me.
But wherefore this? is it to break my heart,
Which loses so much blood for every tear?
Leon. Is it so tender?
Alon. Is it not? oh, heaven!
Doubt of my love! why, I am nothing else;
It quite absorbs my every other passion.
Oh, that this one embrace would last for ever!
Leon. Could this man ever mean to wrong my virtue?
Could this man e'er design upon my life?
Impossible! I throw away the thought. [*aside.*
These tears declare how much I taste the joy
Of being folded in your arms and heart;
My universe does lie within that space.
This dagger bore false witness.
Alon. Ha, my dagger!
It rouses horrid images. Away,
Away with it, and let us talk of love,
Plunge ourselves deep into the sweet illusion,
And hide us there from every other thought.
Leon. It touches you.
Alon. Let's talk of love
Leon. Of death!
Alon. As thou lov'st happiness—
Leon. Of murder!
Alon. Rash,
Rash woman! yet forbear.
Leon. Approve my wrongs!
Alon. Then must I fly, for thy sake and my own.
Leon. Nay, by my injuries, you first must hear me;
Stab me, then think it much to hear my groan!
Alon. Heaven strike me deaf!
Leon. It well may sting you home.
Alon. Alas, thou quite mistakest my cause of pain!
Yet, yet dismiss me; I am all in flames.
Leon. Who has most cause, you or myself? what act
Of my whole life encouraged you to this?
Or of your own, what guilt has drawn it on you?
You find me kind, and think me kind to all;
The weak, ungenerous error of your sex.
What could inspire the thought? we oft'nest judge
From our own hearts; and is yours then so frail,
It prompts you to conceive thus ill of me?
He that can stoop to harbour such a thought,
Deserves to find it true. [*holding him.*]
Alon. Oh, sex, sex, sex! [*turning on her*]
The language of you all. Ill-fated woman!
Why hast thou forced me back into the gulf
Of agonies I had blocked up from thought?
I know the cause; thou saw'st me impotent
Ere while to hurt thee, therefore thou turnest on me:
But, by the pangs I suffer, to thy wo;
For, since thou hast replunged me in my torture,
I will be satisfied.
Leon. Be satisfied!
Alon. Yes, thy own mouth shall witness it against thee.
I will be satisfied.
Leon. Of what?
Alon. Of what!
How darest thou ask that question? woman, woman,
Weak and assured at once! thus 'tis for ever.
Who told thee that thy virtue was suspected?
Who told thee I designed upon thy life?
You found the dagger; but that could not speak;
Nor did I tell thee; who did tell thee then?
Guilt, conscious guilt!
Leon. This to my face! oh, heaven!
Alon. This to thy very soul.
Leon. Thou'rt not in earnest?
Alon. Serious as death.
Leon. Then heaven have mercy on thee.
'Till now I struggled not to think it true;
I sought conviction, and would not believe it;
And dost thou force me? this shall not be borne;
Thou shalt repent this insult. [*going*]
Alon. Madam, stay.
Your passion's wise; 'tis a disguise for guilt:
'Tis my turn now to fix you here a while;
You and your thousand arts shall not escape me.
Leon. Arts!
Alon. Arts. Confess; for death is in my hand.
Leon. 'Tis in your words.
Alon. Confess, confess, confess!
Nor tear my veins with passion to compel thee
Leon. I scorn to answer thee, presumptuous man!
Alon. Deny, then, and incur a fouler shame
Where did I find this picture?
Leon. Ha, Don Carlos!
By my best hopes, more welcome than thy own
Alon. I know it; but is vice so very rank,
That thou should'st dare to dash it in my face?
Nature is sick of thee, abandoned woman!
Leon. Repent.

Alon. Is that for me?
Leon. Fall, ask my pardon.
Alon. Astonishment!
Leon. Dar'st thou persist to think I am dishonest?
Alon. I know thee so.
Leon. This, blow, then, to thy heart——
[*she stabs herself—he endeavours to prevent her.*
Alon. Hoa, Zanga! Isabella! hoa! she bleeds!
Descend, ye blessed angels, to assist her!
Leon. This is the only way I would wound thee,
Though most unjust. Now think me guilty still.

Enter ISABELLA.

Alon. Bear her to instant help. The world to save her.
Leon. Unhappy man! well may'st thou gaze and tremble:
But fix thy terror and amazement right;
Not on my blood, but on thy own distraction.
What hast thou done? whom censured?—Leonora!
When thou had'st censured, thou would'st save her life;
Oh, inconsistent! should I live in shame,
Or stoop to any other means but this
To assert my virtue? no; she who disputes,
Admits it possible she might be guilty.
While aught but truth could be my inducement to it,
While it might look like an excuse to thee,
I scorned to vindicate my innocence;
But, now, I let thy rashness know, the wound
Which least I feel, is—that my dagger made.
[*Isabella leads out Leonora.*
Alon. Ha!—was this woman guilty?—and, if not—
How my thoughts darken that way! grant, kind heaven,
That she prove guilty; or my being end.
Is that my hope, then?—sure the sacred dust
Of her that bore me, trembles in its urn.
Is it in man the sore distress to bear,
When hope itself is blackened to despair,
When all the bliss I pant for, is to gain
In hell, a refuge from severer pain? [*exit.*

Enter ZANGA.

Zan. How stands the great account 'twixt me and vengeance?
Though much is paid, yet still it owes me much,
And I will not abate a single groan—
Ha! that were well—but that were fatal too—
Why, be it so —Revenge so truly great,
Would come too cheap, if bought with less than life.
Come, death, come, hell, then; 'tis resolved, 'tis done.

Enter ISABELLA.

Isa. Ah, Zanga, see me tremble! has not yet
Thy cruel heart its fill? poor Leonora—
Zan. Welters in blood, and gasps for her last breath.
What then? we all must die.
Isa. Alonzo raves,
And in the tempest of his grief, has thrice
Attempted on his life. At length disarmed,
He calls his friends that save him his worst foes,
And importunes the skies for swift perdition.
Thus in his storm of sorrow, after pause,
He started up, and called aloud for Zanga,
For Zanga raved; and see, he seeks you here,
To learn the truth which most he dreads to know.
Zan. Begone. Now, now, my soul, consummate all. [*exit Isa.*

Enter ALONZO.

Alon. Oh, Zanga!
Zan. Do not tremble so; but speak.
Alon. I dare not. [*falls on him*]
Zan. You will drown me with your tears.
Alon. Have I not cause?
Zan. As yet you have no cause.
Alon. Dost thou, too, rave?
Zan. Your anguish is to come:
You much have been abused.
Alon. Abused, by whom?
Zan. To know were little comfort.
Alon. Oh, 'twere much.
Zan. Indeed!
Alon. By heaven! oh, give him to my fury!
Zan. Born for your use, I live but to oblige you
Know then, 'twas—I.
Alon. Am I awake!
Zan. For ever.
Thy wife is guiltless—that's one transport to me;
And I, let thee know it—that's another.
I urged Don Carlos to resign his mistress,
I forged the letter, I disposed the picture;
I hated, I despised, and I destroy!
Alon. Oh! [*swoons*]
Zan. Why, this is well—why, this is blow for blow!
Where are you? crown me, shadow me with laurels,
Ye spirits which delight in just revenge!
Let Europe and her pallid sons go weep;
Let Afric and her hundred thrones rejoice;
Oh, my dear countrymen, look down and see
How I bestride your prostrate conqueror!
I tread on haughty Spain and all her kings.
But this is mercy, this is my indulgence;
'Tis peace, 'tis refuge from my indignation.
I must awake him into horrors. Hoa!
Alonzo, hoa! the Moor is at the gate!
Awake, invincible, omnipotent!
Thou who dost all subdue!
Alon. Inhuman slave!
Zan. Fallen christian, thou mistak'st my character.

Look on me. Who am I? I know, thou say'st
The Moor, a slave, an abject, beaten slave:
Eternal woes to him that made me so!
But look again. Has six years cruel bondage
Extinguished majesty so far, that nought
Shines here, to give an awe to one above thee?
When the great Moorish king, Abdallah, fell,
Fell by thy hand accurst, I fought fast by him,
His son, though through his fondness, in disguise,
Less to expose me to the ambitious foe,—
Ha! does it wake thee?—o'er my father's corse
I stood astride, till I had clove thy crest;
And then was made the captive of a squadron,
And sunk into thy servant—but, oh! what,
What were my wages! hear nor heaven nor earth!
My wages were a blow! by heaven a blow!
And from a mortal hand!

Alon. Oh, villain! villain!

Zan. All strife is vain. [*showing a dagger.*]

Alon. Is thus my love returned?
Is this my recompense? make friends of tigers!
Lay not your young, oh, mothers, on the breast,
For fear they turn to serpents as they lie,
And pay you for their nourishment with death!—
Carlos is dead and Leonora dying!
Both innocent, both murdered, both by me.
That heavenly maid, who should have lived for ever,
At least, have gently slept her soul away!
Whose life should have shut up as evening flowers
At the departing sun—was murdered! murdered!
Oh, shame! oh, guilt! oh, horror! oh, remorse!
Oh, punishment! had Satan never fell,
Hell had been made for me. Oh, Leonora!

Zan. Must I despise thee too, as well as hate thee?
Complain of grief, complain thou art a man.—
Priam from fortune's lofty summit fell;
Great Alexander 'midst his conquests mourned;
Heroes and demi-gods have known their sorrows:
Cæsars have wept; and I have had my blow;
But 'tis revenged, and now my work is done.
Yet ere I fall, be it one part of vengeance
To make thee to confess that I am just.—
Thou seest a prince, whose father thou hast slain,
Whose native country thou hast laid in blood,
Whose sacred person—oh!—thou hast profaned,
Whose reign extinguished—what was left to me,
So highly born? no kingdom, but revenge;
No treasure, but thy tortures and thy groans.
If men should ask who brought thee to thy end,
Tell them the Moor, and they will not despise thee.
If cold white mortals censure this great deed,
Warn them, they judge not of superior beings,
Souls made of fire and children of the sun,
With whom revenge is virtue. Fare thee well—
Now, fully satisfied, I should take leave;
But one thing grieves me, since thy death is near,
I leave thee my example how to die.

As he is going to stab himself, Alonzo rushes upon him to prevent him. In the mean time, enter DON ALVAREZ, attended. They disarm and seize Zanga. Alonzo puts the dagger in his bosom.

Alon. No, monster, thou shalt not escape by death.
Oh, father!

Alv. Oh, Alonzo!—Isabella,
Touched with remorse to see her mistress' pangs,
Told all the dreadful tale.

Alon. What groan was that?

Zan. As I have been a vulture to thy heart,
So will I be a raven to thine ear,
As true as ever snuffed the scent of blood,
As ever flapt its heavenly wing against
The window of the sick, and croaked despair.
Thy wife is dead.

[*Alvarez goes to the side of the stage, and returns*

Alv. The dreadful news is true.

Alon. Prepare the rack; invent new torments for him!

Zan. This, too, is well. The fixed and noble mind
Turns all occurrence to its own advantage;
And I'll make vengeance of calamity.
Were I not thus reduced, thou would'st not know,
That, thus reduced, I dare defy thee still.
Torture thou may'st, but thou shalt ne'er despise me
The blood will follow where the knife is driven,
The flesh will quiver where the pincers tear.
And sighs and cries by nature grow on pain.
But these are foreign to the soul: not mine
The groans that issue, or the tears that fall;
They disobey me: on the rack I scorn thee,
As when my falchion clove thy helm in battle.

Alv. Peace, villain!

Zan. While I live, old man, I'll speak;
And well I know thou dar'st not kill me yet,
For that would rob thy blood-hounds of their prey.

Alon. Who called Alonzo?

Alv. No one called, my son.

Alon. Again?—'tis Carlos' voice, and I obey.—
Oh, how I laugh at all that this can do?
[*showing the dagger.*
The wounds that pained, the wounds that murdered me,
Were given before; I am already dead;
This only marks my body for the grave.
[*stabs himself.*
Afric, thou art revenged.—Oh, Leonora. [*dies.*

Zan. Good ruffians give me leave; my blood is yours,
The wheel's prepared, and you shall have it all.
Let me but look one moment on the dead,
And pay yourselves with gazing on my pangs.
[*he goes to Alonzo's body.*
Is this Alonzo? where's the haughty mien?
Is that the hand which smote me? heavens, how pale!

And art thou dead?—so is my enmity—
I war not with the dust. The great, the proud,
The conqueror of Afric was my foe.
A lion preys not upon carcasses.
This was thy only method to subdue me.
Terror and doubt fall on me; all thy good
Now blazes—all thy guilt is in the grave.
Never had man such funeral applause;
If I lament thee, sure thy worth was great.—
Oh, vengeance, I have followed thee too far,
And to receive me, hell blows all her fires.
[*he is borne off*.

Alv. Dreadful effects of jealousy! a rage
In which the wise with caution will engage;
Reluctant long, and tardy to believe,
Where, swayed by nature, we ourselves deceive.
Where our own folly joins the villain's art,
And each man finds a Zanga in his heart.

EPILOGUE.

Our author sent me, in an humble strain,
To beg you'll bless the offspring of his brain!
And I, your proxy, promised in your name,
The child should live, at least six days of fame.
I like the brat, but still his faults can find;
And by the parent's leave will speak my mind.
Gallants, pray tell me, do you think 'twas well,
To let a willing maid lead apes in hell?
You nicer ladies, should you think it right,
To eat no supper on your wedding night?
Should English husbands dare to starve their wives,
Be sure they'd lead most comfortable lives!
But he loves mischief, and with groundless fears,
Would fain set loving couples by the ears;
Would spoil the tender husbands of our nation,
By teaching them this vile outlandish fashion.
But we've been taught, in our good-natured clime,
That jealousy, though just, is still a crime;
And will be still; for, not to blame the plot,
That same Alonzo was a stupid sot,
To kill a bride, a mistress unenjoyed—
'Twere some excuse, had the poor man been cloyed;
To kill her on suspicion, ere he knew
Whether the hideous charge were false or true—
The priest said grace, she met him in the bower,
In hopes she might anticipate an hour
Love was her errand, but the hot-brained Spaniard,
Instead of love—produced—a filthy poignard—
Had he been wise, at this their private meeting,
The proof o' the pudding had been in the eating;
Madam had then been pleased, and Don contented,
And all this blood and murder been prevented.

THE END OF YOUNG'S WORKS.

THE

LETTERS AND POEMS

OF

THOMAS GRAY.

Contents.

Page.

Life of the Author, - - - - - - - - - v

LETTERS.

1 From Mr. West. Complains of his friend's silence, 1

2 To Mr. West. Answer to the former; a translation of some lines from Statius, ib.

3 From Mr. West. Approbation of the version; ridicule on the Cambridge Collection of Verses on the Marriage of the Prince of Wales, 2

4 To Mr. West. On the little encouragement which he finds given to classical learning at Cambridge; his aversion to metaphysical and mathematical studies, ib.

5 From Mr. West. Answer to the former; advises his correspondent not to give up poetry when he applies himself to the law, ib.

6 To Mr. Walpole. Excuse for not writing to him, &c. 3

7 From Mr. West. A poetical epistle addressed to his Cambridge friend, taken in part from Tibullus, and a prose letter of Mr. Pope, ib.

8 To Mr. West. Thanks him for his poetical epistle; complains of low spirits; Lady Walpole's death, and his concern for Mr. H. Walpole, 4

9 To Mr. Walpole. How he spends his own time in the country; meets with Mr. Southern, the dramatic poet, 5

10 To Mr. Walpole. Supposed manner in which Mr. Walpole spends his time in the country, ib.

11 To Mr. Walpole. Congratulates him on his new place; whimsical description of the quadrangle of Peter-House. 6

12 To Mr. West. On his own leaving the University, ib.

13 To his Mother. His voyage from Dover; description of Calais; Abbeville; Amiens; face of the country, and dress of the people, ib.

14 To Mr. West. Monuments of the kings of France at St. Dennis, &c.; French opera and music; actors, &c. 7

15 To Mr. West. Palace of Versailles; its garden and waterworks; installation of the Knights du St. Esprit, 8

16 To his Mother. Rheims; its Cathedral; disposition and amusements of its inhabitants, 9

17 To his Father. Face of the country between Rheims and Dijoin; description of the latter; monastery of the Carthusians and Cistercians, 10

18 To Mr. West. Lyons; beauty of its environs; Roman antiquities, ib.

19 From Mr. West. His wishes to accompany his friend; his retired life in London; address to his Lyre, in Latin Sapphics, on the prospect of Mr. Gray's return, 11

20 To his Mother. Lyons; excursion to the Grande Chartreuse; solemn and romantic approach to it; his reception there, and commendation of the monastery, ib.

21 To his Father. Geneva; advantage of a free government exhibited in the very look of the people; beauty of the lake, and plenty of its fish, 12

22 To his Mother. Journey over the Alps to Turin; singular accident in passing them; method of traveling over Mount Cenis, 13

23 To Mr. West. Turin; its carnival; more of the views and scenery on the road to the Grande Chartreuse; wild and savage prospects amongst the Alps, agreeable to Livy's description, 14

24 To Mr. West. Genoa; music; the Doge; churches and the Palazzo Doria, ib.

25 To his Mother. Paintings at Modena; Bologna; beauty and riches of Lombardy, 15

26 To his Mother. The Appenines; Florence and its gallery, 16

27 To Mr. West. Journey from Genoa to Florence; elegiac verses occasioned by the sight of the plains where the battle of Trebia was fought, it.

28 To his Mother. Death of the pope; intended departure for Rome; first and pleasing appearance of an Italian spring, 17

29 To his Mother. Cathedral of Sienna; Viterbo; distant sight of Rome; the Tiber; entrance into the city; St. Peter's; introduction of the Cardinal d'Auvergne into the conclave, ib.

30 To his Mother. Illumination of St. Peter's on Good Friday, &c. 18

31 To Mr. West. Comic account of the Palace of the duke of Modena at Tivoli; the Anio; its cascade; situation of the town; villas of Horace and Mæcenas, and other remains of antiquity; modern aqueducts, and grand Roman ball, ib.

32 To Mr. West. Ludicrous allusion to ancient customs; Albano and its lake; Castel Gondolfo, prospect from the palace; an observation of Mr. Walpole's on the views in that part of Italy; Latin inscriptions, ancient and modern, 20

33 To his Mother. Road to Naples; beautiful situation of that city; its bay; of Baiæ, and several other antiquities; some account of the first discovery of an ancient town not known to be Herculaneum, 21

34 To his Father. Departure from Rome, and return to Florence; no likelihood of the conclave's rising; some of the cardinals dead; description of the Pretender, his sons, and court; procession at Naples; sight of the king and queen; mildness of the air at Florence, ib

35 From Mr. West. On his quitting the Temple, and reason for it, 22

36 To Mr. West. Answer to the foregoing letter; some account of Naples and its environs, and of Mr. Walpole's and his return to Florence. ib.

37 To his Mother. Excursion to Bologna, election of a pope; description of his person, with an odd speech which he made to the cardinals in the conclave, 24

38 To his Father. Uncertainty of the route he shall take in his return to England; magnificence of the Italians in their reception of strangers; and parsimony when alone; the great applause which the new pope meets with; one of his *bon mots*, ib.

39 To his Father. Total want of amusement at Florence, occasioned by the late emperor's funeral not being public; a procession to avert the ill effects of a late inundation; intention of going to Venice; an invasion from the Neapolitans apprehended; the inhabitants of Tuscany dissatisfied with the government, 25

40 To Mr. West. The time of his departure from Florence

Letter. Page.
determined; alteration in his temper and spirits; difference between an Italian fair and an English one; a farewell to Florence and its prospects in Latin hexameters; imitation, in the same language, of an Italian sonnet, 25
41 From Mr. West. His spirits not as yet improved by country air; has begun to read Tacitus, but not to relish him, 26
42 To Mr. West. Earnest hopes for his friend's better health, as the warm weather comes on; defence of Tacitus, and his character; of the new Dunciad; sends him a speech from the first scene of his Agrippina, 27
43 From Mr. West. Criticisms on his friend's tragic style; Latin hexameters on his own cough, ib
*43 To Dr. Wharton. On taking his degree of Bachelor of Civil Law, 28
44 To Dr. Wharton. Ridicule on university laziness; of Dr. Akenside's poem on the Pleasures of Imagination, ib.
45 To Mr. Walpole. Ludicrous description of the Scottish army's approach to the capital; animadversions on Pope, 29
46 To Dr. Wharton. His amusements in town; reflections on riches; character of Aristotle, ib.
47 To Mr. Walpole. Observations on his tragedy of Agrippina; admirable picture of true Philosophy, 30
48 To Mr. Walpole. Ludicrous compliment of condolence on the death of his favourite cat, enclosing an ode on that subject, 31
49 To Dr. Wharton. Loss by fire of a house in Cornhill; on Diodorus Siculus; M. Gresset's Poems; Thomson's Castle of Indolence; Ode to a Water Nymph, with a character of its author, 31
50 To Dr. Wharton. Ludicrous account of the duke of Newcastle's installation at Cambridge; on the ode then performed, and more concerning the author of it, ib.
51 To his Mother. Consolatory on the death of her sister, 32
52 To Mr. Walpole. Encloses his Elegy in a Country Churchyard, ib.

ODES.

I. On the Spring, 33
II. On the death of a favourite Cat, ib.
III. On a distant prospect of Eton College, 34
IV. To Adversity, 35
V. The progress of Poesy, 36
VI. The Bard, 37
VII. The Fatal Sisters, 39
VIII. The descent of Odin, 40
IX. The triumph of Owen, 41
X. The death of Hoel, 42
XI. For Music, on the installation of the duke of Grafton, Chancellor of the University, ib.

MISCELLANIES.

A Long Story, 44
Elegy written in a Country Churchyard, 45
Epitaph on Mrs. Clarke, 47
Translations from Statius, ib
Gray of himself, ib.

The Life of Thomas Gray.

Thomas Gray was born in Cornhill, in the city of London, on the 26th of December, 1716. His father, Philip Gray, was a money-scrivener, but being of an indolent and profuse disposition, he rather diminished than improved his paternal fortune. Our author received his classical education at Eton school, under Mr. Antrobus, his mother's brother, a man of sound learning and refined taste, who directed his nephew to those pursuits which laid the foundation of his future literary fame.

During his continuance at Eton, he contracted a friendship with Mr. Horace Walpole, well known for his knowledge in the fine arts; and Mr. Richard West, son of the lord Chancellor of Ireland, a youth of very promising talents.

When he left Eton school in 1734, he went to Cambridge, and entered a pensioner at Peterhouse, at the recommendation of his uncle Antrobus, who had been a fellow of that college. It is said that, from his effeminacy and fair complexion, he acquired, among his fellow students, the appellation of *Miss* Gray, to which the delicacy of his manners seems not a little to have contributed. Mr. Walpole was at that time a fellow commoner of King's College, in the same university; a fortunate circumstance, which afforded Gray frequent opportunities of intercourse with his honourable friend.

Mr. West went from Eton to Christ Church, Oxford; and in this state of separation, these two votaries of the muses, whose dispositions were congenial, commenced an epistolary correspondence, part of which is published by Mr. Mason, a gentleman whose character stands high in the republic of letters.

Gray, having imbibed a taste for poetry, did not relish those abstruse studies which generally occupy the minds of students at college; and therefore, as he found very little gratification from academical pursuits, he left Cambridge in 1738, and returned to London, intending to apply himself to the study of the law; but this intention was soon laid aside, upon an invitation given him by Mr. Walpole, to accompany him in his travels abroad; a situation highly preferable, in Gray's opinion, to the dry study of the law.

They set out together for France, and visited most of the places worthy of notice in that country; from thence they proceeded to Italy, where an unfortunate dispute taking place between them, a separation ensued upon their arrival at Florence. Mr. Walpole, afterwards, with great candour and liberality, took upon himself the blame of the quarrel; though, if we consider the matter coolly and impartially, we may be induced to conclude that Gray, from a conscious superiority of ability, might have claimed a deference to his opinion and judgment, which his honourable friend was not at that time disposed to admit: the rupture, however, was very unpleasant to both parties.

Gray pursued his journey to Venice on an economical plan, suitable to the circumscribed state of his finances, and having continued there some weeks, returned to England in September, 1741. He appears, from his letters, published by Mr. Mason, to have paid the minutest attention to every object, worthy of notice, throughout the course of his travels. His descriptions are lively and picturesque, and bear particular marks of his genius and disposition. We admire the sublimity of his ideas when he ascends the stupendous heights of the Alps, and are charmed with his display of nature, decked in all the beauties of vegetation. Indeed, abundant information, as well as entertainment, may be derived from his casual letters.

In about two months after his arrival in England, he lost his father, who, by an indiscreet profusion, had so impaired his fortune, as not to admit of his son's prosecuting the study of the law with that degree of respectability which the nature of the profession requires, without becoming burdensome to his mother and aunt. To obviate, therefore, their importunities on the subject, he went to Cambridge, and took his bachelor's degree in civil law.

But the inconveniences and distress attached to a scanty fortune, were not the only ills our poet had to encounter at this time: he had not only lost the friendship of Mr. Walpole abroad, but poor West, the partner of his heart, fell a victim to complicated maladies, brought on by family misfortunes, on the first of June, 1742, at Popes, a village in Hertfordshire, where he went for the benefit of the air.

The excessive degree in which his mind was agitated for the loss of his friend, will best appear from the following beautiful little sonnet:

" In vain to me the smiling mornings shine,
And reddening Phœbus lifts his golden fire:
The birds in vain their amorous descant join
Or cheerful fields resume their green attire;
These ears, alas! for other notes repine:
A different object do these eyes require;

My lonely anguish melts no heart but mine,
And in my breast the imperfect joys expire;
Yet morning smiles the busy race to cheer,
And new-born pleasure brings to happier men;
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;
To warm their little loves the birds complain;
fruitless mourn to him that can not hear;
And weep the more, because I weep in vain."

Mr. Gray now seems to have applied his mind very sedulously to poetical composition; his *Ode to Spring* was written early in June, to his friend Mr. West, before he received the melancholy news of his death: how our poet's susceptible mind was affected by that melancholy incident, is evidently demonstrated by the lines quoted above; the impression, indeed, appears to have been too deep to be soon effaced; and the tenor of the subjects which called for the exertions of his poetical talents subsequent to the production of this Ode, corroborates that observation; these were his *Prospect of Eton*, and his *Ode to Adversity*. It is also supposed, and with great probability, that he began his *Elegy in a Country Churchyard* about the same time. He passed some weeks at Stoke, near Windsor, where his mother and aunt resided, and in that pleasing retirement finished several of his most celebrated poems.

From thence he returned to Cambridge, which, from this period, was his chief residence during the remainder of his life. The conveniences with which a college life was attended, to a person of his narrow fortune, and studious turn of mind, were more than a compensation for the dislike which, for several reasons, he bore to the place: but he was perfectly reconciled to his situation, on Mr. Mason's being elected a fellow of Pembroke-Hall; a circumstance which brought him a companion, who, during life retained for him the highest degree of friendship and esteem.

In 1742 he was admitted to the degree of bachelor in the civil law, as appears from a letter written to his particular friend Dr. Wharton, of Old Park, near Durham, formerly fellow of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, in which he ridicules, with much point and humour, the follies and foibles, and the dulness and formality, which prevailed in the university.

In order to enrich his mind with the ideas of others, he devoted a considerable portion of his time to the study of the best Greek authors; so that in the course of six years, there were hardly any writers of eminence in that language whose works he had not only read but thoroughly digested.

His attention, however, to the Greek classics, did not wholly engross his time; for he found leisure to advert, in a new sarcastical manner, to the ignorance and dulness with which he was surrounded, though situated in the centre of learning.

In 1744 he seems to have given up his attention to the Muses, Mr. Walpole, desirous of preserving what he had already written, as well as perpetuating the merit of their deceased friend, West, endeavoured to prevail with Gray, to whom he had previously become reconciled, to publish his own poems, together with those of West; but Gray declined it, conceiving their productions united would not suffice to fill even a small volume.

In 1747 Gray became acquainted with Mr. Mason, then a scholar of St. John's College, and afterwards fellow of Pembroke-hall. Mr. Mason, who was a man of great learning and ingenuity, had written the year before, his "Monody on the Death of Pope," and his "Il Bellicoso," and "Il Pacifico:" and Gray revised these pieces at the request of a friend. This laid the foundation of a friendship that terminated but with life: and Mr. Mason, after the death of Gray, testified his regard for him, by superintending the publication of his works.

The same year he wrote a little ode on the Death of a favourite cat of Mr. Walpole's, in which humour and instruction are happily blended; but the following year he produced an effort of much more importance; the fragment of an *Essay on the Alliance of Education and Government*. Its tendency was to demonstrate the necessary concurrence of both to form great and useful men.

In 1750, he put the finishing stroke to his *Elegy written in a Country Church-yard*, which was communicated first to his friend Mr. Walpole, and by him to many persons of rank and distinction. This beautiful production introduced the author to the favour of Lady Cobham, and gave occasion to a singular composition, called *A Long Story*; in which various effusions of wit and humour are very happily interspersed.

The Elegy having found its way into the "Magazine of Magazines," the author wrote to Mr. Walpole, requesting that he would put it into the hands of Mr. Dodsley, and order him to print it immediately, in order to rescue it from the disgrace it might have incurred by its appearance in a magazine. The Elegy was the most popular of all our author's productions; it ran through eleven editions, and was translated into Latin by Anstey and Roberts; and in the same year a version of it was published by Lloyd. Mr. Bently, an eminent artist of that time, wishing to decorate this elegant composition with every ornament of which it is so highly deserving, drew for it a set of designs, as he also did for the rest of Gray's productions, for which the artist was liberally repaid by the author in some beautiful stanzas, but unfortunately no perfect copy of them remains. The following, however, are given as a specimen.

"In silent gaze the tuneful choir among,
Half pleased, but blushing, let the muse admire,
While Bently leads her sister art along,
And bids the pencil answer to the lyre.

See, in their course each transitory thought,
Fixed by his touch, a lasting essence take;
Each dream, in fancy's airy colouring wrought,
To local symmetry and life awake!

The tardy rhymes, that used to linger on,
To censure cold, and negligent of fame;
In swifter measures animated run,
And catch a lustre from his genuine flame.

Ah! could they catch his strength, his easy grace,
His quick creation, his unerring line;
The energy of Pope they might efface,
And Dryden's harmony submit to mine.

But not to one in this benighted age
Is that diviner inspiration given,
That burns in Shakspeare's or in Milton's page,
The pomp and prodigality of Heaven.

As when conspiring in the diamond's blaze,
The meaner gems, that singly charm the sight,
Together dart their intermingled rays,
And dazzle with a luxury of light.

Enough for me, if, to some feeling breast
My lines a secret sympathy impart,
And as their pleasing influence flows confessed,
A sigh of soft reflection heave the heart."

It appears, by a letter to Dr. Wharton, that Gray finished his Ode on the *Progress of Poetry* early in 1755; the *Bard* was also begun about the same time; and the following beautiful fragment on the *Pleasure arising from Vicissitude* the next year. The merit of the two former pieces was not immediately perceived, nor generally acknowledged. Garrick wrote a few lines in their praise. Lloyd and Colman wrote, in concert, two Odes to "Oblivion" and "Obscurity," in which they were ridiculed with much ingenuity.

Now the golden morn aloft
Weaves her dew-bespangled wing
With vermil cheek, and whisper soft,
She woos the tardy spring;
Till April starts, and calls around
The sleeping fragrance from the ground,
And lightly o'er the living scene
Scatters his freshest tenderest green.

New-born flocks, in rustic dance,
Frisking ply their feeble feet;
Forgetful of their wintery trance,
The birds his presence greet;
But chief the skylark warbles high
His trembling, thrilling ecstasy;
And, lessening from the dazzled sight,
Melts into air and liquid light.

Yesterday the sullen year
Saw the snowy whirlwind fly;
Mute was the music of the air,
The herd stood drooping by;
Their raptures now, that wildly flow,
No yesterday nor morrow know;
'Tis man alone that joy descries
With forward and reverted eyes.

Smiles on past misfortune's brow
Soft reflection's hand can trace,
And o'er the cheek of sorrow throw
A melancholy grace:
While hope prolongs our happier hour,
Or deepest shades, that dimly lour,
And blacken round our weary way,
Gilds with a gleam of distant day.

Still where rosy pleasure leads,
See a kindred grief pursue,
Behind the steps that misery treads
Approaching comfort view;
The hues of bliss more brightly glow,
Chastised by sabler tints of wo;
And blended form, with artful strife,
The strength and harmony of life.

See the wretch, that long has tost
On the thorny bed of Pain,
At length repair his vigour lost.
And breathe and walk again.
The meanest floweret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale,
The common sun, the air, the skies,
To him are opening Paradise."

Our author's reputation, as a poet, was so high, that, on the death of Colley Cibber, in 1757, he had the honour of refusing the office of poet-laureat, to which he was probably induced by the disgrace brought upon it through the inability of some who had filled it.

His curiosity some time after drew him away from Cambridge to a lodging near the British Museum, where he resided near three years, reading and transcribing.

In 1762, on the death of Mr. Turner, professor of modern languages and history at Cambridge, he was, according to his own expression, "cockered and spirited up" to apply to Lord Bute for the succession. His lordship refused him with all the politeness of a courtier, the office having been previously promised to Mr. Brocket, the tutor of Sir James Lowther.

His health being on the decline, in 1765, he undertook a journey to Scotland, conceiving he should derive benefit from exercise and change of situation. His account of that country, as far as

it extends, is curious and elegant; for as his mind was comprehensive, it was employed in the contemplation of all the works of art, all the appearances of nature, and all the monuments of past events.

During his stay in Scotland he contracted a friendship with Dr. Beattie, in whom he found, as he himself expresses it, a poet, a philosopher, and a good man. Through the intervention of his friend the doctor, the Marischal College at Aberdeen offered him the degree of doctor of laws, which he thought it decent to decline, having omitted to take it at Cambridge.

In December, 1767, Dr. Beattie, still desirous that his country should leave a memento of its regard to the merit of our poet, solicited his permission to print, at the University of Glasgow, an elegant edition of his works. Gray could not comply with his friend's request, as he had given his promise to Mr. Dodsley. However, as a compliment to them both, he presented them with a copy, containing a few notes, and the imitations of the old Norwegian poetry, intended to supplant the Long Story, which was printed at first to illustrate Mr. Bently's designs.

In 1768, our author obtained that office without solicitation, for which he had before applied without effect. The professorship of languages and history again became vacant, and he received an offer of it from the Duke of Grafton, who had succeeded Lord Bute in office. The place was valuable in itself, the salary being 400*l.* a-year; but it was rendered peculiarly acceptable to Mr. Gray, as he obtained it without solicitation.

Soon after he succeeded to this office, the impaired state of his health rendered another journey necessary; and he visited, in 1769, the counties of Westmoreland and Cumberland. His remarks on the wonderful scenery which these northern regions display, he transmitted in epistolary journals to his friend, Dr. Wharton, which abound, according to Mr. Mason's elegant diction, with all the wildness of Salvator, and the softness of Claude

He appears to have been much affected by the anxiety he felt at holding a place without discharging the duties annexed to it. He had always designed reading lectures, but never put it in practice; and a consciousness of this neglect, contributed not a little to increase the malady under which he had long laboured: nay, the office at length became so irksome, that he seriously proposed to resign it.

Towards the close of May, 1771, he removed from Cambridge to London, after having suffered violent attacks of an hereditary gout, to which he had long been subject, notwithstanding he had observed the most rigid abstemiousness throughout the whole course of his life. By the advice of his physicians, he removed from London to Kensington; the air of which place proved so salutary, that he was soon enabled to return to Cambridge, whence he designed to make a visit to his friend, Dr. Wharton, at Old Park, near Durham; indulging a fond hope that the excursion would tend to the re-establishment of his health: but, alas! that hope proved delusive. On the 24th of July he was seized, while at dinner in the College-hall, with a sudden nausea, which obliged him to retire to his chamber. The gout had fixed on his stomach in such a degree as to resist all the powers of medicine. On the 29th he was attacked with a strong convulsion, which returned with increased violence the ensuing day; and on the evening of the 31st of May, 1771, he departed this life in the 55th year of his age.

From the narrative of his friend, Mr. Mason, it appears, that Gray was actuated by motives of self improvement, and self gratification, in his application to the Muses, rather than any view to pecuniary emolument. His pursuits were in general disinterested; and as he was free from avarice on the one hand, so was he from extravagance on the other: being one of those few characters in the annals of literature, especially in the poetical class, who are devoid of self interest, and at the same time attentive to economy: but Mr. Mason adds, that he was induced to decline taking any advantage of his literary productions by a degree of pride, which influenced him to disdain the idea of being thought an author by profession.

It appears from the same narrative, that Gray made considerable progress in the study of architecture, particularly the Gothic. He endeavoured to trace this branch of the science, from the period of its commencement, through its various changes, till it arrived at its perfection in the time of Henry VIII. He applied himself also to the study of heraldry, of which he obtained a very competent knowledge, as appears from his *Remarks on Saxon Churches*, in the introduction to Mr. Bentham's *History of Ely*.

But the favourite study of Gray, for the last two years of his life, was natural history, which he rather resumed than began, as he had acquired some knowledge of botany in early life, while he was under the tuition of his uncle Antrobus. He wrote copious marginal notes to the works of Linnæus, and other writers in the three kingdoms of nature: and Mr. Mason further observes, that, excepting pure mathematics, and the studies dependent on that science, there was hardly any part of human learning in which he had not acquired a competent skill; in most of them a consummate mastery.

Mr. Mason has declined drawing any formal character of him: but has adopted one from a letter to James Boswell, Esq. by the Rev. Mr. Temple, rector of St. Gluvias, in Cornwall, first print-

ed anonymously in the London Magazine, which, as we conceive authentic, from the sanction of Mr. Mason, we shall therefore transcribe.

"Perhaps he was the most learned man in Europe. He was equally acquainted with the eloquent and profound parts of science, and that not superficially but thoroughly. He knew every branch of history, both natural and civil; had read all the original historians of England, France and Italy; and was a great antiquarian. Criticism, metaphysics, morals, and politics, made a principal part of his study; voyages and travels of all sorts were his favourite amusements; and he had a fine taste in painting, prints, architecture, and gardening. With such a fund of knowledge, his conversation must have been equally instructing and entertaining; but he was also a good man, a man of virtue and humanity. There is no character without some speck, some imperfection, and I think the greatest defect in his was an affectation of delicacy, or rather effeminacy, and a visible fastidiousness, or contempt and disdain of his inferiors in science. He also had, in some degree, that weakness which disgusted Voltaire so much in Mr. Congreve: though he seemed to value others chiefly according to the progress they had made in knowledge, yet he could not bear to be considered himself merely as a man of letters; and though without birth, or fortune, or station, his desire was to be looked upon as a private independent gentleman, who read for his amusement. Perhaps it may be said, What signifies so much knowledge, when it produced so little? Is it worth taking so much pains to leave no memorial but a few poems? But let it be considered that Mr. Gray was, to others, at least innocently employed; to himself, certainly beneficially. His time passed agreeably; he was every day making some new acquisition in science; his mind was enlarged, his heart softened, his virtue strengthened; the world and mankind were shown to him without a mask; and he was taught to consider every thing as trifling, and unworthy of the attention of a wise man, except the pursuit of knowledge and practice of virtue, in that state wherein God hath placed us."

In addition to this character, Mr. Mason has remarked, that Gray's effeminacy was affected most before those whom he did not wish to please: and that he is unjustly charged with making knowledge his sole reason of preference, as he paid his esteem to none whom he did not likewise believe to be good.

Dr. Johnson makes the following observation:—"What has occurred to me, from the slight inspection of his letters, in which my undertaking has engaged me, is, that his mind had a large grasp; that his curiosity was unlimited, and his judgment cultivated; that he was a man likely to love much where he loved at all, but that he was fastidious, and hard to please. His contempt, however, is often employed, where I hope it will be approved, upon scepticism and infidelity. His short account of Shaftesbury I will insert.

"'You say you can not conceive how Lord Shaftesbury came to be a philosopher in vogue: I will tell you; first, he was a lord; secondly, he was as vain as any of his readers; thirdly, men are very prone to believe what they do not understand; fourthly, they will believe any thing at all, provided they are under no obligation to believe it; fifthly, they love to take a new road, even when that road leads no where; sixthly, he was reckoned a fine writer, and seems always to mean more than he said. Would you have any more reasons? An interval of above forty years has pretty well destroyed the charm. A dead lord ranks with commoners: vanity is no longer interested in the matter: for a new road is become an old one.'"

As a writer, he had this peculiarity, that he did not write his pieces first rudely, and then correct them, but laboured every line as it arose in the train of composition; and he had a notion not very peculiar, that he could not write but at certain times, or at happy moments; a fantastic foppery to which our kindness for a man of learning and of virtue wishes him to have been superior.

As a poet, he stands high in the estimation of the candid and judicious. His works are not numerous; but they bear the marks of intense application, and careful revision. The Elegy in the Church-yard is deemed his master-piece; the subject is interesting, the sentiment simple and pathetic, and the versification charmingly melodious. This beautiful composition has been often selected by orators for the display of their rhetorical talents. But as the most finished productions of the human mind have not escaped censure, the works of our author have undergone illiberal comments. His Elegy has been supposed defective in want of plan. Dr. Knox, in his Essays, has observed, "that it is thought by some to be no more than a confused heap of splendid ideas, thrown together without order and without proportion." Some passages have been censured by Kelly in the *Babbler:* and imitations of different authors have been pointed out by other critics. But these imitations can not be ascertained, as there are numberless instances of coincidence of ideas; so that it is difficult to say, with precision, what is or is not a designed or accidental imitation.

Gray, in his Elegy in the Church-yard, has great merit in adverting to the most interesting passions of the human mind, yet his genius is not marked alone by the tender sensibility so conspicuous in that elegant piece; but there is a sublimity which gives it an equal claim to universal admiration.

His Odes on *The Progress of Poetry*, and of

The Bard, according to Mr. Mason's account, "breathe the high spirit of lyric enthusiasm. The transitions are sudden and impetuous; the language full of fire and force; and the imagery carried without impropriety, to the most daring height. They have been accused of obscurity; but the one can be obscure to those only who have not read Pindar; and the other only to those who are unacquainted with the history of our own nation."

Of his other lyric pieces, Mr. Wakefield, a learned and ingenious commentator, observes, that, though, like all other human productions, they are not without their defects, yet the spirit of poetry, and exquisite charms of the verse, are more than a compensation for those defects. The Ode on *Eton College* abounds with sentiments natural, and consonant to the feelings of humanity, exhibited with perspicuity of method, and in elegant, intelligible, and expressive language. The Sonnet on *The Death of West*, and the Epitaph on Sir *William Williams*, are as perfect compositions of the kind as any in our language.

Dr. Johnson was confessedly a man of great genius; but the partial and uncandid mode of criticism he has adopted in his remarks on the writings of Gray, has given to liberal minds great and just offence. According to Mr. Mason's account, he has subjected Gray's poetry to the most rigorous examination. Declining all consideration of the general plan and conduct of the pieces, he has confined himself solely to strictures on words and forms of expression; and Mr. Mason very pertinently adds, that *verbal* criticism is an ordeal which the most perfect composition can not pass without injury.

He has also fallen under Mr. Wakefield's severest censure. This commentator affirms, that "he thinks a refutation of his strictures upon Gray a necessary service to the public, without which they might operate with a malignant influence upon the national taste. His censure, however, is too general, and expressed with too much vehemence; and his remarks betray, upon the whole, an unreasonable fastidiousness of taste, and an unbecoming illiberality of spirit. He appears to have turned an unwilling eye upon the beauties of Gray, because his jealousy would not suffer him to see such superlative merit in a cotemporary." These remarks of Mr. Wakefield appear to be well founded: and it has been observed by another writer, that Dr. Johnson, being strongly influenced by his political and religious principles, was inclined to treat, with the utmost severity, some of the productions of our best writers; to which may be imputed that severity with which he censures the lyric performances of Gray. It is highly probable that no one poetical reader will universally subscribe to his decisions, though all may admire his vast intuitive knowledge, and power of discrimination.

In one instance, the doctor's inconsistency, and deviation from his general character, does him honour. After having commented with the most rigid severity on the poetical works of Gray, as if conscious of the injustice done him, he seems to apologize by the following declaration, which concludes his criticism, and shall conclude the memoirs of our author.

"In the character of his Elegy (says Johnson) I rejoice and concur with the common reader; for, by the common sense of readers, uncorrupted with literary prejudices, all the refinements of subtility, and the dogmatism of learning, must be finally decided all claim to poetical honours. The *Churchyard* abounds with images which find a mirror in every mind, and with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo. The four stanzas beginning, *Yet, e'en these bones*, are to me original; I have never seen the notions in any other place: yet he that reads them here, persuades himself that he has always felt them. Had Gray written often thus, it had been vain to blame, and useless to praise him."

LETTERS

OF

THOMAS GRAY.

FROM MR. WEST* TO MR. GRAY.

You use me very cruelly; you have sent me but one letter since I have been at Oxford, and that too agreeable not to make me sensible how great my loss is in not having more. Next to seeing you is the pleasure of seeing your hand-writing; next to hearing you is the pleasure of hearing from you. Really and sincerely I wonder at you, that you thought it not worth while to answer my last letter. I hope this will have better success in behalf of your quondam school-fellow; in behalf of one who has walked hand in hand with you, like the two children in the wood,

> Through many a flowery path and shelly grot,
> Where learning lulled us in her private maze.

The very thought, you see, tips my pen with poetry, and brings Eton to my view. Consider me very seriously here in a strange country, inhabited by things that call themselves doctors and masters of arts; a country flowing with syllogisms and ale, where Horace and Virgil are equally unknown; consider me, I say, in this melancholy light, and then think if something be not due to

Yours.

Christ Church, Nov. 14, 1735.

P. S. I desire you will send me soon, and truly and positively, a History of your own Time.†

TO MR. WEST.

Permit me again to write to you, though I have so long neglected my duty, and forgive my brevity, when I tell you, it is occasioned wholly by the hurry I am in to get to a place where I expect to meet with no other pleasure than the sight of you; for I am preparing for London in a few days at furthest. I do not wonder in the least at your frequent blaming my indolence, it ought rather to be called ingratitude, and I am obliged to your goodness for softening so harsh an appellation.—When we meet, it will, however, be my greatest of pleasures to know what you do, what you read, and how you spend your time, &c. &c. and to tell you what I do not read, and how I do not, &c. for almost all the employment of my hours may be best explained by negatives; take my word and experience upon it, doing nothing is a most amusing business; and yet neither something nor nothing gives me any pleasure. When you have seen one of my days, you have seen a whole year of my life; they go round and round like the blind horse in the mill, only he has the satisfaction of fancying he makes a progress, and gets some ground; my eyes are open enough to see the same dull prospect, and to know that having made four-and-twenty steps more, I shall be just where I was: I may, better than most people, say my life is but a span, were I not afraid lest you should not believe that a person so short-lived could write even so long a letter as this; in short, I believe I must not send you a history of my own time, till I can send you that also of the Reformation.* However, as the most undeserving people in the world must surely have the vanity to wish somebody had a regard for them, so I need not wonder at my own, in being pleased that you care about me. You need not doubt, therefore, of having a first row in the front box of my little heart, and I believe you are not in danger of being crowded there; it is asking you to an old play, indeed, but you will be candid enough to excuse the whole piece for the sake of a few tolerable lines.

For this little while past I have been playing with Statius; we yesterday had a game at quoits together; you will easily forgive me for having broke his head, as you have a little pique to him. I send you my translation, which I did not engage in because I liked that part of the poem, nor do I now send it to you because I think it deserves it, but merely to show you how I mispend my days.

> Third in the labours of the Disc came on,
> With sturdy step and slow, Hippomedon, &c.

Cambridge, May 3, 1736.

* Mr. West's father was lord chancellor of Ireland. His grandfather, by the mother, the famous bishop Burnet. He removed from Eton to Oxford, about the same time that Mr. Gray left that place for Cambridge. In April, 1738, he left Christ Church for the Inner Temple, and Mr. Gray removed from Peterhouse to town the latter end of that year; intending also to apply himself to the study of the law in the same society.

† Alluding to his grandfather's history.

* Carrying on the allusion to the other history wrote by Mr West's grandfather.

FROM MR. WEST.

I AGREE with you that you have broke Statius's head, but it is in like manner as Apollo broke Hyacinth's, you have foiled him infinitely at his own weapon: I must insist on seeing the rest of your translation, and then I will examine it entire, and compare it with the Latin, and be very wise and severe, and put on an inflexible face, such as becomes the character of a true son of Aristarchus, of hypercritical memory. In the meanwhile,

And calmed the terrors of his claws in gold,

is exactly Statius—*Summos auro mansueverat ungues.* I never knew before that the golden fangs on hammercloths were so old a fashion. Your Hymeneal I was told was the best in the Cambridge collection before I saw it, and, indeed, it is no great compliment to tell you I thought it so when I had seen it, but sincerely it pleased me best. Methinks the college bards have run into a strange taste on this occasion. Such soft unmeaning stuff about Venus and Cupid, and Peleus and Thetis, and Zephyrs and Dryads, was never read. As for my poor little Eclogue, it has been condemned and beheaded by our Westminster judges; an exordium of about sixteen lines absolutely cut off, and its other limbs quartered in a most barbarous manner. I will send it you in my next as my true and lawful heir, in exclusion of the pretender, who has the impudence to appear under my name.

As yet I have not looked into Sir Isaac. Public disputations I hate; mathematics I reverence; history, morality, and natural philosophy have the greatest charms in my eye; but who can forget poetry? they call it idleness, but it is surely the most enchanting thing in the world, "*ac dulce otium et pæne omni negotio pulchrius.*"

I am, dear Sir, yours while I am

R. W.

Christ Church, May 24, 1736.

TO MR. WEST.

YOU must know that I do not take degrees, and, after this term, shall have nothing more of college impertinences to undergo, which I trust will be some pleasure to you, as it is a great one to me. I have endured lectures daily and hourly since I came last, supported by the hopes of being shortly at full liberty, to give myself up to my friends and classical companions, who, poor souls! though I see them fallen into great contempt with most people here, yet I can not help sticking to them, and out of a spirit of obstinacy (I think) love them the better for it; and, indeed, what can I do else? Must I plunge into metaphysics? Alas! I can not see in the dark; nature has not furnished me with the optics of a cat. Must I pore upon mathematics? Alas! I can not see in too much light; I am no eagle. It is very possible that two and two make four, but I would not give four farthings to demonstrate this ever so clearly; and if these be the profits of life, give me the amusements of it. The people I behold all around me, it seems, know all this and more, and yet I do not know one of them who inspires me with any ambition of being like him. Surely it was not this place, now Cambridge, but formerly known by the name of Babylon, that the prophet spoke when he said, "the wild beasts of the desert shall dwell there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures, and owls shall build there, and satyrs shall dance there; their forts and towers shall be a den for ever, a joy of wild asses; there shall the great owl make her nest, and lay and hatch and gather under her shadow; It shall be a court of dragons; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest." You see here is a pretty collection of desolate animals, which is verified in this town to a tittle, and perhaps it may also allude to your habitation, for you know all types may be taken by abundance of handles; however, I defy your owls to match mine.

If the default of your spirits and nerves be nothing but the effect of the hyp, I have no more to say. We all must submit to that wayward queen: I too in no small degree own her sway.

I feel her influence while I speak her power.

But if it be a real distemper, pray take more care of your health, if not for your own at least for our sakes, and do not be so soon weary of this little world: I do not know what refined* friendships you may have contracted in the other, but pray do not be in a hurry to see your acquaintance above; among your terrestrial familiars, however, though I say it that should not say it, there positively is not one that has a greater esteem for you than

Yours most sincerely, &c.

Peterhouse, Dec. 1736.

FROM MR. WEST.

I CONGRATULATE you on your being about to leave college,† and rejoice much you carry no degrees with you. For I would not have you dignified, and I not, for the world, you would have insulted me so. My eyes, such as they are, like yours, are neither metaphysical nor mathematical;

* Perhaps he meant to ridicule the affected manner of Mrs. Rowe's letters from the dead to the living.

† I suspect that Mr. West mistook his correspondent; who, in saying he did not take degrees, meant only to let his friend know that he should soon be released from lectures and disputations. It is certain that Mr. Gray continued at college near two years after the time he wrote the preceding letter

I have, nevertheless, a great respect for your connoisseurs that way, but am always contented to be their humble admirer. Your collection of desolate animals pleased me so much: but Oxford, I can assure you, has her owls that match yours, and the prophecy has certainly a squint that way. Well, you are leaving this dismal land of bondage, and which way are you turning your face? Your friends, indeed, may be happy in you, but what will you do with your classic companions? An inn of court is as horrid a place as a college, and a moot case is as dear to gentle dullness as a syllogism. But wherever you go, let me beg you not to throw poetry, "like a nauseous weed away;" cherish its sweets in your bosom; they will serve you now and then to correct the disgusting sober follies of the common law, *misce stultitiam consiliis brevem, dulce est desipere in loco;* so said Horace to Virgil, those two sons of Anak in poetry, and so say I to you in this degenerate land of pigmies,

> Mix with your grave designs a little pleasure,
> Each day of business has its hour of leisure.

In one of these hours I hope, dear Sir, you will sometimes think of me, write to me, and know me yours,

Ἐξαυδᾶ, μὴ κωθι νοᾳ, ἵνα εἰδομεν ἀμφω.

that is, write freely to me and openly, as I do to you; and to give you a proof of it, I have sent you an elegy of Tibullus translated. Tibullus, you must know, is my favourite elegiac poet; for his language is more elegant, and his thoughts more natural than Ovid's. Ovid excels him only in wit, of which no poet had more in my opinion. The reason I choose so melancholy a kind of poesie, is, because my low spirits, and constant ill health, (things in me not imaginary, as you surmise, but too real, alas! and I fear, constitutional,) "have tuned my heart to elegies of wo;" and this likewise is the reason why I am the most irregular thing at college, for you may depend upon it I value my health above what they call discipline. As for this poor unlicked thing of an elegy, pray criticise it unmercifully, for I send it with that intent. Indeed your late translation of Statius might have deterred me: but I know you are not more able to excel others, than you are apt to forgive the want of excellence, especially when it is found in the productions of

Your most sincere friend.

Christ Church, Dec. 22, 1736.

TO MR. WALPOLE.

YOU can never weary me with the repetition of any thing that makes me sensible of your kindness: since that has been the only idea of any social happiness that I have almost ever received, and which (begging your pardon for thinking so differently from you in such cases) I would by no means have parted with for an exemption from all the uneasiness mixed with it; but it would be unjust to imagine my taste was any rule of yours; for which reason my letters are shorter and less frequent than they would be, had I any materials but myself to entertain you with. Love and brown sugar must be a poor regale for one of your gout, and, alas! you know I am by trade a grocer.* Scandal (if I had any) is a merchandise you do not profess dealing in; now and then, indeed, and to oblige a friend, you may perhaps slip a little out of your pocket, as a decayed gentlewoman would a piece of right mecklin, or a little quantity of run tea, but this only now and then, not to make a practice of it. Monsters appertaining to this climate you have seen already, both wet and dry. So you perceive within how narrow bounds my pen is circumscribed, and the whole contents of my share in our correspondence may be reduced under the two heads of first, You; secondly, I; the first is, indeed, a subject to expatiate upon, but you may laugh at me for talking about what I do not understand; the second is so tiny, so tiresome, that you shall hear no more of it than it is ever

Yours.

Peterhouse, Dec. 23, 1736.

FROM MR. WEST.

I HAVE been very ill, and am still hardly recovered. Do you remember Elegy 5th, Book the 3d, of Tibullus, Vos tenet, &c., and do you remember a letter of Mr. Pope's, in sickness, to Mr. Steele? This melancholy elegy, and this melancholy letter, I turned into a more melancholy epistle of my own, during my sickness, in the way of imitation; and this I send to you and my friends at Cambridge, not to divert them, for I can not, but merely to show them how sincere I was when sick: I hope my sending it to them now may convince them I am no less sincere, though perhaps more simple, when well.

AD AMICOS.†

Yes, happy youths, on Camus' sedgy side,
You feel each joy that friendship can divide;
Each realm of science and of art explore,
And with the ancient blend the modern lore.

* *i. e.* A man who deals only in coarse and ordinary wares, to these he compares the plain sincerity of his own friendship undisguised by flattery; which, had he chosen to carry on the allusion, he might have termed the trade of a confectioner.

† Almost all Tibullus's elegy is imitated in this little piece, from whence his transition to Mr. Pope's letter is very artfully contrived, and bespeaks a degree of judgment much beyond Mr. West's years.

Studious alone to learn whate'er may tend
To raise the genius or the heart to mend;
Now pleased along the cloistered walk you rove,
And trace the verdant mazes of the grove,
Where social oft, and oft alone, he chose
To catch the zephyr, and to court the muse.
Meantime at me (while all devoid of art
These lines give back the image of my heart)
At me the power that comes or soon or late,
Or aims, or seems to aim, the dart of fate;
From you remote, methinks, alone I stand
Like some sad exile in a desert land;
Around no friends their lenient care to join
In mutual warmth, and mix their heart with mine.
Or real pains, or those which fancy raise,
For ever blot the sunshine of my days;
To sickness still, and still to grief a prey,
Health turns from me her rosy face away.
Just Heaven! what sin, ere life begins to bloom,
Devotes my head untimely to the tomb?
Did e'er this hand against a brother's life
Drug the dire bowl, or point the murderous knife?
Did e'er this tongue the slanderer's tale proclaim,
Or madly violate my Maker's name?
Did e'er this heart betray a friend or foe,
Or know a thought but all the world might know?
As yet, just started from the lists of time,
My growing years have scarcely told their prime;
Useless, as yet, through life I've idly run,
No pleasures tasted, and few duties done.
* Ah, who, ere autumn's mellowing suns appear,
Would pluck the promise of the vernal year?
Or, ere the grapes their purple hue betray,
Tear the crude cluster from the morning spray?
Stern power of Fate, whose ebon sceptre rules
The Stygian deserts and Cimmerian pools,
Forbear, nor rashly smite my youthful heart,
A victim yet unworthy of thy dart;
Ah, stay till age shall blast my withering face,
Shake in my head, and falter in my pace;
Then aim the shaft, then meditate the blow,
† And to the dead my willing shade shall go.
How weak is man to Reason's judging eye!
Born in this moment, in the next we die;
Part mortal clay, and part ethereal fire,
Too proud to creep, too humble to aspire.
In vain our plans of happiness we raise,
Pain is our lot, and patience is our praise;
Wealth, lineage, honours, conquest, or a throne;
Are what the wise would fear to call their own.
Health is at best a vain precarious thing,
And fair-faced youth is ever on the wing:

* 'Tis like the stream, beside whose watery bed
Some blooming plant exalts his flowery head,
Nursed by the wave the spreading branches rise,
Shade all the ground and flourish to the skies;
The waves the while beneath in secret flow,
And undermine the hollow bank below;
Wide and more wide the waters urge their way,
Bare all the roots, and on their fibres prey,
Too late the plant bewails his foolish pride,
And sinks, untimely, in the whelming tide.
But why repine? does life deserve my sigh?
Few will lament my loss whene'er I die.
† For those the wretches I despise or hate,
I neither envy nor regard their fate.
For me, whene'er all conquering death shall spread
His wings around my unrepining head,
‡ I care not; though this face be seen no more,
The world will pass as cheerful as before;
Bright as before the day-star will appear,
The fields as verdant, and the skies as clear;
Nor storms nor comets will my doom declare,
Nor signs on earth, nor portents in the air;
Unknown and silent will depart my breath,
Nor nature e'er take notice of my death.
Yet some there are (ere spent my vital days)
Within whose breasts my tomb I wish to raise.
Loved in my life, lamented in my end,
Their praise would crown me as their precepts mend:
To them may these fond lines my name endear,
Not from the Poet, but the Friend sincere.

Christ Church, July 4, 1737.

TO MR. WEST.

AFTER a month's expectation of you, and a fortnight's despair at Cambridge, I am come to

* Quid fraudare juvat vitem crescentibus uvis?
Et modo nata mala vellere poma manu?
So the original. The paraphrase seems to be infinitely more beautiful. There is a peculiar blemish in the second line arising from the synonimes *mala* and *poma*.

† Here he quits Tibullus: the ten following verses have but a remote reference to Mr Pope's letter.

* "Youth, at the very best, is but the betrayer of human life in a gentler and smoother manner than age: 'tis like the stream that nourishes a plant upon a bank, and causes it to flourish and blossom to the sight, but at the same time is undermining it at the root in secret." *Pope's Works, vol. 7, page* 254, 1*st edit. Warburton.* Mr. West, by prolonging his paraphrase of this simile, gives it additional beauty from that very circumstance, but he ought to have introduced it by Mr. Pope's own thought, "Youth is a betrayer;" his couplet preceding the simile conveys too general a reflection.

† "I am not at all uneasy at the thought that many men, whom I never had any esteem for, are likely to enjoy this world after me.— *Vide ibid.*

‡ "The morning after my exit the sun will rise as bright as ever, the flowers smell as sweet, the plants spring as green;" so far Mr. West copies his original, but instead of the following part of the sentence, "People will laugh as heartily and marry as fast as they used to do," he inserts a more solemn idea,

Nor storms nor comets, &c.

justly perceiving that the elegiac turn of his epistle would not admit so ludicrous a thought, as was in its place in Mr. Pope's familiar letter; so that we see, young as he was, he had obtained the art of judiciously selecting; one of the first provinces of good taste.

town, and to better hopes of seeing you. If what you sent me last be the product of your melancholy, what may I not expect from your more cheerful hours? For by this time the ill health that you complain of is (I hope) quite departed; though, if I were self-interested, I ought to wish for the continuance of any thing that could be the occasion of so much pleasure to me. Low spirits are my true and faithful companions; they get up with me, go to bed with me, make journeys and returns as I do; nay, and pay visits, and will even affect to be jocose, and force a feeble laugh with me: but most commonly we sit alone together, and are the prettiest insipid company in the world. However, when you come, I believe they must undergo the fate of all humble companions, and be discarded. Would I could turn them to the same use that you have done, and make an Apollo of them. If they could write such verses with me, not hartshorn, nor spirit of amber, nor all that furnishes the closet of an apothecary's widow, should persuade me to part with them: but, while I write to you, I hear the bad news of Lady Walpole's death on Saturday night last. Forgive me if the thought of what my poor Horace must feel on that account, obliges me to have done in reminding you that I am Yours, &c.

London, Aug. 22, 1737.

TO MR. WALPOLE.

I WAS hindered in my last, and so could not give you all the trouble I would have done. The description of a road which your coach wheels have so often honoured, it would be needless to give you: suffice it that I arrived safe* at my uncle's who is a great hunter in imagination; his dogs take up every chair in the house, so I am forced to stand at this present writing, and though the gout forbids him galloping after them in the field, yet he continues still to regale his ears and nose with their comfortable noise and stink. He holds me mighty cheap, I perceive, for walking when I should ride, and reading when I should hunt. My comfort amidst all this is, that I have at the distance of half a mile, through a green lane, a forest (the vulgar call it a common) all my own, at least as good as so, for I spy no human thing in it but myself. It is a little chaos of mountains and precipices; mountains, it is true, that do not ascend much above the clouds, nor are the declivities quite so amazing as Dover cliff; but just such hills as people who love their necks as well as I do, may venture to climb, and crags that give the eye as much pleasure as if they were more dangerous; both vale and hill are covered with most venerable beeches, and other very reverend vegetables, that, like most other ancient people, are always dreaming out their old stories to the wind.

> And as they bow their hoary tops, relate
> In murmuring sounds, the dark decrees of fate;
> While visions as poetic eyes avow,
> Cling to each leaf and swarm on every bough.

At the foot of one of these squats me I, (il penseroso) and there grow to the trunk for a whole morning. The timorous hare and sportive squirrel gambol around me like Adam in Paradise, before he had an Eve; but I think he did not use to read Virgil, as I commonly do there. In this situation I often converse with my Horace, aloud too, that is talk to you, but I do not remember that I ever heard you answer me. I beg pardon for taking all the conversation to myself, but it is entirely your own fault. We have old Mr. Southern at a gentleman's house a little way off, who often comes to see us; he is now seventy-seven years old, and has almost wholly lost his memory; but is as agreeable as an old man can be, at least I persuade myself so when I look at him, and think of Isabella and Oroonoko. I shall be in town in about three weeks. Adieu.

September, 1737.

TO MR. WALPOLE.*

I SYMPATHIZE with you in the sufferings which you foresee are coming upon you. We are both at present, I imagine, in no very agreeable situation: for my part I am under the misfortune of having nothing to do, but it is a misfortune which, thank my stars, I can pretty well bear. You are in a confusion of wine, roaring, and hunting, and tobacco, and, heaven be praised, you too can pretty well bear it; while our evils are no more, I believe we shall not repine. I imagine, however, you will rather choose to converse with the living dead, that adorn the walls of your apartments, than with the dead living that deck the middles of them; and prefer a picture of still life to the realities of a noisy one, and, as I guess, will imitate what you prefer, and for an hour or two at noon will stick yourself up as formal as if you had been fixed in your frame for these hundred years, with a pink or rose in one hand, and a great seal ring on the other. Your name, I assure you, has been propagated in these countries by a convert of yours, one * * *; he has brought over his whole family to you: they were before pretty good Whigs, but now they are absolute Walpolians. We have hardly any body in the parish but knows exactly the dimensions of the hall and saloon at Houghton, and begin to believe

* At Burnham in Buckinghamshire.

* At this time with his father at Houghton

that the lantern* is not so great a consumer of the fat of the land as disaffected persons have said: for your reputation, we keep to ourselves your not hunting nor drinking hogan, either of which here would be sufficient to lay your honour in the dust. To-morrow se'nnight I hope to be in town, and not long after at Cambridge.

I am, &c.

Burnham, September, 1737.

TO MR. WALPOLE.

My dear Sir, I should say †Mr. Inspector General of the Exports and Imports; but that appellation would make but an odd figure in conjunction with the three familiar monosyllables above written, for

> Nun bene conveniunt nec in una sede morantur
> Majestas et amor.

Which is, being interpreted, Love does not live at the Custom-house; however by what style, title or denomination soever you choose to be dignified, or distinguished hereafter, these three words will stick by you like a bur, and you can no more get quit of these and your christian name, than St. Anthony could of his pig. My motions at present (which you are pleased to ask after) are much like those of a pendulum or (Dr. Longically‡ speaking) oscillatory. I swing from chapel or hall home, or from home to chapel or hall. All the strange incidents that happen in my journeys and returns I shall be sure to acquaint you with; the most wonderful is, that it now rains exceedingly, this has refreshed the prospect,§ as the way for the most part lies between green fields on either hand, terminated with buildings at some distance, castles, I presume, and of great antiquity. The roads are very good, being, as I suspect, the works of Julius Cæsar's army, for they still preserve, in many places, the appearance of a pavement in pretty good repair, and if they were not so near home, might perhaps be as much admired as the Via Appia; there are at present several rivulets to be crossed, and which serve at present to enliven the view all around. The country is exceeding fruitful in ravens and such black cattle; but, not to tire you with my travels, I abrubtly conclude.

Yours, &c.

August, 1738.

* A favourite object of Tory satire at the time.

† Mr. Walpole was just named to that post, which he exchanged soon after for that of Usher of the Exchequer.

‡ Dr. Long, the master of Pembroke-Hall, at this time read lectures in experimental philosophy.

§ All that follows is a humorous hyperbolic description of the quadrangle of Peter-House.

TO MR. WEST.

I am coming away all so fast, and leaving behind me, without the least remorse, all the beauties of Sturbridge Fair. Its white bears may roar, its apes may wring their hands, and crocodiles cry their eyes out, all's one for that; I shall not once visit them, nor so much as take my leave. The university has published a severe edict against schismatical congregations, and created half a dozen new little procterlings to see its orders executed, being under mighty apprehensions lest Henley* and his gilt tub should come to the fair and seduce their young ones; but their pains are to small purpose, for lo, after all, he is not coming.

I am at this instant in the very agonies of leaving College, and would not wish the worst of my enemies a worse situation. If you knew the dust, the old boxes, the bedsteads, and tutors that are about my ears, you would look upon this letter as a great effort of my resolution and unconcernedness in the midst of evils. I fill up my paper with a loose sort of version of that scene in Pastor Fido that begins, Care selve beati.†

Sept. 1738.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Amiens, April 1, N. S. 1739.

As we made but a very short journey to-day, and came to our inn early, I sit down to give you some account of our expedition. On the 29th (according to the style here) we left Dover at twelve at noon, and with a pretty brisk gale, which pleased every body mighty well, except myself, who was extremely sick the whole time; we reached Calais by five: the weather changed, and it began to snow hard the minute we got into the harbour, where we took the boat, and soon landed. Calais is an exceedingly old, but very pretty town, and we hardly saw any thing there that was not so new and so different from England, that it surprised us agreeably. We went the next morning to the great church, and were at high mass (it being Easter Monday.) We saw also the Convent of the Capuchins, and the nuns of St. Dominic; with these last we held much conversation, especially with an English nun, a Mrs. Davis, of whose work I sent you, by the return of the packet, a letter-case to remember her by. In the afternoon we took a post-chaise (it still snowing very hard) for Boulogne, which was only eighteen miles further. This chaise is a strange sort of conveyance, of much greater use than beauty, re-

* Orator Henley.

† This Latin version is extremely elegiac, but as it is only a version I do not insert it.

sembling an ill-shaped chariot, only with the door opening before instead of the side; three horses draw it, one between the shafts, and the other two on each side, on one of which the postillion rides, and drives too.* This vehicle will, upon occasion, go fourscore miles a day, but Mr. Walpole, being in no hurry, chooses to make easy journeys of it, and they are easy ones indeed; for the motion is much like that of a sedan; we go about six miles an hour, and commonly change horses at the end of it. It is true they are no very graceful steeds, but they go well, and through roads which they say are bad for France, but to me they seem gravel walks and bowling-greens; in short, it would be the finest travelling in the world, were it not for the inns, which are mostly terrible places indeed. But to describe our progress somewhat more regularly, we came into Boulogne when it was almost dark, and went out pretty early on Tuesday morning; so that all I can say about it is, that it is a large, old, fortified town, with more English in it than French. On Tuesday we were to go to Abbéville, seventeen leagues, or fifty-one short English miles; but by the way we dined at Moutreuil, much to our hearts' content, on stinking mutton, cutlets, addled eggs, and ditch water. Madame the hostess made her appearance in long lappets of bone lace, and a sack of linsey-woolsey. We supped and lodged pretty well at Abbéville, and had time to see a little of it before we came out this morning. There are seventeen convents in it, out of which we saw the chapels of the Minims, and the Carmelite nuns. We are now come further thirty miles to Amiens, the chief city of the province of Picardy. We have seen the Cathedral, which is just what that of Canterbury must have been before the Reformation. It is about the same size, a huge Gothic building, beset on the outside with thousands of small statues, and within adorned with beautiful painted windows, and a vast number of chapels dressed out in all their finery of altar-pieces, embroidery gilding, and marble. Over the high altar are preserved, in a very large wrought shrine of massy gold, the relics of St. Firmin, their patron saint. We went also to the chapels of the Jesuits and Ursuline nuns, the latter of which is very richly adorned. To-morrow we shall lie at Clermont, and next day reach Paris. The country we have passed through hitherto has been flat, open, but agreeably diversified with villages, fields well cultivated, and little rivers. On every hillock is a wind-mill, a crucifix, or a Virgin Mary dressed in flowers, and a sarcenet robe; one sees not many people or carriages on the road; now and then indeed you meet a strolling friar, a countryman with his great muff, or a woman riding astride on a little ass, with short petticoats, and a great head-dress of blue wool. * * *

* This was before the introduction of post-chaises here, or it would not have appeared a circumstance worthy notice.

TO MR. WEST.

Paris, April 12, 1739.

Enfin donc me voici à Paris. Mr. Walpole is gone out to supper at Lord Conway's, and here I remain alone, though invited too. Do not think I make a merit of writing to you preferably to a good supper; for these three days we have been here, have actually given me an aversion to eating in general. If hunger be the best sauce to meat, the French are certainly the worst cooks in the world; for what tables we have seen have been so delicately served, and so profusely, that, after rising from one of them, one imagines it impossible ever to eat again. And now, if I tell you all I have in my head, you will believe me mad; *mais n'importe, courage, allons!* for if I wait till my head grow clear and settle a little, you may stay long enough for a letter. Six days have we been coming hither, which other people do in two: they have not been disagreeable ones: through a fine, open country, admirable roads, and in an easy conveyance; the inns not absolutely intolerable, and images quite unusual presenting themselves on all hands. At Amiens we saw the fine cathedral, and eat *paté de perdix:* passed through the park of Chantilly by the Duke of Bourbon's palace, which we only beheld as we passed; broke down at Lausarche; stopped at St. Denis, saw all the beautiful monuments of the kings of France, and the vast treasures of the abbey, rubies, and emeralds as big as small eggs, crucifixes and vows, crowns and reliquaires, of inestimable value; but of all their curiosities the thing the most to our tastes, and which they indeed do the justice to esteem the glory of their collection, was a vase of an entire onyx, measuring at least five inches over, three deep, and of great thickness. It is at least two thousand years old, the beauty of the stone and sculpture upon it (representing the mysteries of Bacchus) beyond expression admirable; we have dreamed of it ever since. The jolly old Benedictine, that showed us the treasures, had in his youth been ten years a soldier; he laughed at all the relics, was very full of stories, and mighty obliging. On Saturday evening we got to Paris, and were driving through the streets a long while before we knew where we were. The minute we came, voilà Milors Holdernesse, Conway, and his brother; all stayed supper, and till two o'clock in the morning, for here nobody ever sleeps; it is not the way. Next day go to dine at my Lord Holdernesse's, there was the Abbé Prevôt, author of Cleveland, and several other pieces much esteemed: the rest were English. At night we went to

the Pandore; a spectacle literally, for it is nothing but a beautiful piece of machinery of three scenes. The first represents the chaos, and by degrees the separation of the elements: the second, the temple of Jupiter, and the giving of the box to Pandora: the third the opening of the box, and all the mischiefs that ensued. An absurd design, but executed in the highest perfection, and that in one of the finest theatres in the world; it is the *grande sales des machines* in the *Palais des Tuilleries*. Next day dined at Lord Waldegrave's; then to the opera. Imagine to yourself for the drama four acts* entirely unconnected with each other, each founded on some little history, skilfully taken out of an ancient author, *e. g.* Ovid's Metamorphoses, &c. and with great address converted into a French piece of gallantry. For instance, that which I saw, called the *Ballet de la Paix*, had its first act built upon the story of Nireus. Homer having said that he was the handsomest man of his time, the poet, imagining such a one could not want a mistress, has given him one. These two come in and sing sentiment in lamentable strains, neither air nor recitative; only, to one's great joy, they are every now and then interrupted by a dance, or (to one's great sorrow) by a chorus that borders the stage from one end to the other, and screams, past all power of simile to represent. The second act was Baucis and Philemon. Baucis is a beautiful young shepherdess, and Philemon her swain. Jupiter falls in love with her, but nothing will prevail upon her; so it is all mighty well, and the chorus sing and dance the praises of Constancy. The two other acts were about Iphis and Ianthe, and the judgment of Paris. Imagine, I say, all this transacted by cracked voices, trilling divisions upon two notes and a half, accompanied by an orchestra of humstrums, and a whole house more attentive than if Farinelli sung, and you will almost have formed a just notion of the thing. Our astonishment at their absurdity you can never conceive; we had enough to do to express it by screaming an hour louder than the whole dramatis personæ. We have also seen twice the *Comedie Francoise*; first, the Mahomet Second, a tragedy that has had a great run of late; and the thing itself does not want its beauties, but the actors are beyond measure delightful. Mademoiselle Gausin (M. Voltaire's Zara) has with a charming (though little) person, the most pathetic tone of voice, the finest expression in her face, and most proper action imaginable. There is also a Dufrêne, who did the chief character, a handsome man and a prodigious fine actor. The second we saw the *Philosophe Marié*, and here they performed as well in comedy; there is a Mademoiselle Quinault, somewhat in Mrs. Clive's way, and a Monsieur Grandval, in the nature of Wilks, who is the genteelest thing in the world. There are several more would be much admired in England, and many (whom we have not seen) much celebrated here. Great part of our time is spent in seeing churches and palaces full of fine pictures, &c, the quarter of which is not yet exhausted. For my part I could entertain myself this month merely with the common streets and the people in them

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* The French opera has only three acts, but often a prologue on a different subject, which (as Mr. Walpole informs me, who saw it at the same time) was the case in this very representation.

TO MR. WEST.

Paris, May 22, 1739.

AFTER the little particulars aforesaid I should have proceeded to a journal of our transactions for this week past, should have carried you post from hence to Versailles, hurried you through the gardens to Trianon, back again to Paris, so away to Chantilly. But the fatigue is perhaps more than you can bear, and moreover I think I have reason to stomach your last piece of gravity. Supposing you were in your soberest mood, I am sorry you should think me capable of ever being so dissipé, so evaporé, as not to be in a condition of relishing any thing you could say to me. And now, if you have a mind to make your peace with me, arouse ye from your megrims and your melancholies, and (for exercise is good for you) throw away your night-cap, call for your jack-boots, and set out with me, last Saturday evening, for Versailles—and so at eight o'clock, passing through a road speckled with vines, and villas, and hares, and partridges, we arrive at the great avenue, flanked on either hand, with a double row of trees about half a mile long, and with the palace itself to terminate the view; facing which, on each side of you, is placed a semi-circle of very handsome buildings, which form the stables. These we will not enter into, because you know we are no jockies. Well! and is this the great front of Versailles? What a huge heap of littleness! It is composed, as it were of three courts, all open to the eye at once, and gradually diminishing till you come to the royal apartments, which on this side present but half a dozen windows and a balcony. This last is all that can be called a front, for the rest is only great wings. The hue of all this mass is black, dirty red, and yellow; the first proceeding from stone changed by age; the second, from a mixture of brick; and the last from a profusion of tarnished gilding. You can not see a more disagreeable tout-ensemble; and, to finish the matter, it is all stuck over in many places with small busts of a tawny hue between every two windows. We pass through this to go into the garden, and here the case is indeed

altered; nothing can be vaster and more magnificent than the back front; before it a very spacious terrace spreads itself, adorned with two large basins; these are bordered and lined (as most of the others) with white marble, with handsome statues of bronze reclined on their edges. From hence you descend a huge flight of steps into a semi-circle formed by woods that are cut all round into niches, which are filled with beautiful copies of all the famous antique statues in white marble. Just in the midst is the basin of Latona; she and her children are standing on the top of a rock in the middle, on the sides of which are the peasants, some half, some totally changed into frogs, all which throw out water at her in great plenty. From this place runs on the great alley, which brings you into a complete round, where is the basin of Apollo, the biggest in the gardens. He is rising in his car out of the water, surrounded by nymphs and tritons, all in bronze, and finely executed; and these, as they play, raise a perfect storm about him; beyond this is the great canal, a prodigious long piece of water, that terminates the whole. All this you have at one coup d'œil in entering the garden, which is truly great. I can not say as much of the general taste of the place; every thing you behold savours too much of art; all is forced, all is constrained about you; statues and vases sowed every where without distinction; sugar-loaves and mince-pies of yew; scrawl-work of box, and little squirting jets-d'eau, besides a great sameness in the walks, can not help striking one at first sight, not to mention the silliest of labyrinths, and all Æsop's fables in water; since these were designed in usum Delphini only. Here then we walk by moonlight, and hear the ladies and the nightingales sing. Next morning, being Whitsunday, make ready to go to the Installation of nine knights du Saint Esprit, Cambis is one:* high mass is celebrated with music, great crowd, much incense, king, queen, dauphin, mesdames, cardinals, and court! knights arrayed by his majesty; reverences before the altar, not bows, but curtsies; stiff hams; much tittering among the ladies; trumpets, kettle-drums, and fifes. My dear West, I am vastly delighted with Trianon, all of us with Chantilly; if you would know why, you must have patience, for I can hold my pen no longer, except to tell you that I saw Britannicus last night; all the characters, particularly Agrippina and Nero done to perfection; to-morrow Phædra and Hippolytus. We are making you a little bundle of petite pieces; there is nothing in them, but they are acting at present; there are two Crebillon's Letters, and Amusemens sur le langage des Bêtes, said to be one Bougeant, a Jesuit; they are both esteemed, and lately come out. This day se'ennight we go to Rheims.

* The Comte de Cambis was lately returned from his embassy in England.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Rheims, June 21, N. S. 1739.

We have now been settled almost three weeks in this city, which is more considerable upon account of its size and antiquity, than from the number of its inhabitants, or any advantages of commerce. There is little in it worth a stranger's curiosity, besides the cathedral church, which is a vast Gothic building of a surprising beauty and lightness, all covered over with a profusion of little statues, and other ornaments. It is here the kings of France are crowned by the archbishop of Rheims, who is the first peer, and the primate of the kingdom. The holy vessel made use of on that occasion, which contains the oil, is kept in the church of St. Nicasius hard by, and is believed to have been brought by an angel from heaven at the coronation of Clovis, the first Christian king. The streets in general have but a melancholy aspect, the houses all old; the public walks run along the side of a great moat under the ramparts, where one hears a continual croaking of frogs; the country round about is one great plain covered with vines, which at this time of the year afford no very pleasing prospect, as being not above a foot high. What pleasures the place denies to the sight, it makes up to the palate; since you have nothing to drink but the best champaigne in the world, and all sorts of provisions equally good. As to other pleasures, there is not that freedom of conversation among the people of fashion here, that one sees in other parts of France; for though they are not very numerous in this place, and consequently must live a good deal together, yet they never come to any great familiarity with one another. As my lord Conway had spent a good part of his time among them, his brother, and we with him, were soon introduced into all their assemblies. As soon as you enter, the lady of the house presents each of you a card, and offers you a party at quadrille; you sit down, and play forty deals without intermission, excepting one quarter of an hour, when every body rises to eat of what they call the *gouter*, which supplies the place of our tea, and is a service of wine, fruits, cream, sweetmeats, crawfish, and cheese. People take what they like and sit down again to play; after that, they make little parties to go to the walks together, and then all the company retire to their separate habitations. Very seldom any suppers or dinners are given; and this is the manner they live among one another; not so much out of any aversion they have to pleasure, as out of a sort of formality they have contracted by not being much frequented by people who have lived at Paris. It is sure they do

not hate gaiety any more than the rest of their country-people, and can enter into diversions, that are once proposed, with a good grace enough; for instance, the other evening we happened to be got together in a company of eighteen people, men and women of the best fashion here, at a garden in the town, to walk; when one of the ladies bethought herself of asking, why should not we sup here? Immediately the cloth was laid by the side of a fountain under the trees, and a very elegant supper served up: after which another said, Come, let us sing; and directly began herself. From singing we insensibly fell to dancing, and singing in a round: when somebody mentioned the violins, and immediately a company of them was ordered. Minuets were begun in the open air, and then some country-dances, which held till four o'clock next morning: at which hour the gayest lady there proposed, that such as were weary should get into their coaches, and the rest of them should dance before them with the music in the van; and in this manner we paraded through all the principal streets of the city, and waked every body in it. Mr. Walpole had a mind to make a custom of the thing, and would have given a ball in the same manner next week, but the women did not come into it; so I believe it will drop, and they will return to their dull cards, and usual formalities. We are not to stay above a month longer here, and shall then go to Dijon, the chief city of Burgundy, a very splendid and a very gay town; at least such is the present design.

TO HIS FATHER.

Dijon, Friday, Sept. 11, N. S. 1739.

We have made three short days' journey of it from Rheims hither, where we arrived the night before last. The road we have passed through has been extremely agreeable: it runs through the most fertile part of Champaigne, by the side of the river Marne, with a chain of hills on each hand at some distance, entirely covered with woods and vineyards, and every now and then the ruins of some old castle on their tops: we lay at St. Dizier the first night, and at Langres the second, and got hither the next evening, time enough to have a full view of this city on entering it. It lies in a very extensive plain covered with vines and corn, and consequently is plentifully supplied with both. I need not tell you that it is the chief city of Burgundy, nor that it is of great antiquity; considering which, one should imagine it ought to be larger than one finds it. However, what it wants in extent is made up in beauty and cleanliness, and in rich convents and churches, most of which we have seen. The palace of the States is a magnificent new building, where the duke of Bourbon is lodged when he comes over every three years to hold that assembly as governor of the province. A quarter of a mile out of the town is a famous abbey of Carthusians, which we are just returned from seeing. In their chapel are the tombs of the ancient dukes of Burgundy, that were so powerful, till, at the death of Charles the Bold, the last of them, this part of his dominions was united by Louis XI. to the crown of France. To-morrow we are to pay a visit to the abbot of the Cistercians, who lives a few leagues off, and who uses to receive all strangers with great civility; his abbey is one of the richest in the kingdom; he keeps open house always, and lives with great magnificence. We have seen enough of this town already, to make us regret the time we spent at Rheims; it is full of people of condition, who seem to form a much more agreeable society than we found in Champaigne, but as we shall stay here but two or three days longer, it is not worth while to be introduced into their houses. On Monday or Tuesday we are to set out for Lyons, which is two days' journey distant, and from thence you shall hear again from me.

TO MR. WEST.

Lyons, Sep. 18, N. S. 1739.

Scavez vous bien, mon cher ami, que je vous hais, que je vous deteste? voila, des termes un peu fortes; and that will save me, upon a just computation, a page of paper and six drops of ink; which, if I confined myself to reproaches of a more moderate nature, I should be obliged to employ in using you according to your deserts. What! to let any body reside three months at Rheims, and write but once to them? Please to consult Tully de Amicit. page 5, line 25, and you will find it said in express terms, "Ad amicum inter Remos relegatum mense uno quinquies scriptum esto;" nothing more plain, or less liable to false interpretations. Now because, I suppose, it will give you pain to know we are in being, I take this opportunity to tell you that we are at the ancient and celebrated Lugdunum, a city situated upon the confluence of the Rhône and Saône, (Arar, I should say) two people, who, though of tempers extremely unlike, think fit to join hands here, and make a little party to travel to the Mediterranean in company; the lady comes gliding along through the fruitful plains of Burgundy, *incredibili lenitate, ita ut oculis in utram partem fluat judicari non possit;* the gentleman runs all rough and roaring down from the mountains of Switzerland to meet her; and with all her soft airs she likes him never the worse: she goes through the middle of the city in state, and he passes incog. without the walls, but waits for her a little below. The houses here are so high, and

the streets so narrow, as would be sufficient to render Lyons the dismallest place in the world; but the number of people, and the face of commerce diffused about it, are, at least, as sufficient to make it the liveliest. Between these two sufficiencies you will be in doubt what to think of it; so we shall leave the city, and proceed to its environs, which are beautiful beyond expression: it is surrounded with mountains, and those mountains all bedropped and bespeckled with houses, gardens, and plantations of the rich Bourgeois, who have from thence a prospect of the city in the vale below on one hand, on the other the rich plains of the Lyonnois, with the rivers winding among them, and the Alps, with the mountains of Dauphine, to bound the view. All yesterday morning we were busied in climbing up Mount Fourviere, where the ancient city stood perched at such a height, that nothing but the hopes of gain could certainly ever persuade their neighbours to pay them a visit. Here are the ruins of the emperor's palaces, that resided here, that is to say, Augustus and Severus: they consist in nothing but great masses of old wall, that have only their quality to make them respected. In a vineyard of the Minims are remains of a theatre; the fathers, whom they belong to, hold them in no esteem at all, and would have showed us their sacristy and chapel instead of them. The Ursuline Nuns have in their garden some Roman baths, but we having the misfortune to be men, and heretics, they did not think proper to admit us. Hard by are eight arches of the most magnificent aqueduct, said to be erected by Antony, when his legions were quartered here: there are many other parts of it dispersed up and down the country, for it brought the water from a river many leagues off in La Forez. Here are remains too of Agrippa's seven great roads which met at Lyons; in some places they lie twelve feet deep in the ground. In short, a thousand matters that you shall not know, till you give me a description of the Pais de Tombridge, and the effect its waters have upon you.

FROM MR. WEST.

Temple, Sept. 28, 1739.

If wishes could turn to realities, I would fling down my law books, and sup with you to-night. But, alas! here I am doomed to fix, while you are fluttering from city to city, and enjoying all the pleasures which a gay climate can afford. It is out of the power of my heart to envy your good fortune, yet I can not help indulging a few natural desires; as for example, to take a walk with you on the banks of the Rhone, and to be climbing up Mount Fourviere;

Jam mens prætrepidans avet vagari:
Jam læti studio pedes vigescunt.

However, so long as I am not deprived of your correspondence, so long shall I always find some pleasure in being at home. And, setting all vain curiosity aside, when the fit is over, and my reason begins to come to herself, I have several other powerful motives which might easily cure me of my restless inclinations. Amongst these, my mother's ill state of health is not the least, which was the reason of our going to Tunbridge; so that you can not expect much description or amusement from thence. Nor indeed is there much room for either; for all diversions there may be reduced to two articles, gaming and going to church. They were pleased to publish certain Tunbrigiana this season; but such ana! I believe there were never so many vile little verses put together before. So much for Tunbridge. London affords me as little to say. What! so huge a town as London? Yes, consider only how I live in that town. I never go into the gay or high world, and consequently receive nothing from thence to brighten my imagination. The busy world I leave to the busy; and am resolved never to talk politics till I can act at the same time. To tell old stories, or prate of old books, seems a little musty; and *toujours, chapon bouilli*, won't do. However, for want of better fare, take another little mouthful of my poetry.

O meæ jucunda comes quietis!
Quæ fere ægrotum solita es levare
Pectus, et sensim, ah! nimis ingruentes
Fallere curas:

Quid canes? quanto Lyra dic furore
Gesties, quando hâc reducem sodalem!
Glauciam* gaudere simul videbis
Meque sub umbrâ?

TO HIS MOTHER.

Lyons, Oct. 13, N. S. 1739.

It is now almost five weeks since I left Dijon, one of the gayest and most agreeable little cities of France, for Lyons, its reverse in all these particulars. It is the second in the kingdom in bigness and rank; the streets excessively narrow and nasty; the houses immensely high and large; (that, for instance, where we are lodged, has twenty-five rooms on a floor, and that for five stories;) it swarms with inhabitants like Paris itself, but chiefly a mercantile people too much given up to commerce to think of their own, much less of a stranger's diversions. We have no acquaintance in the town, but such English as happen to be

* He gives Mr. Gray the name of Glaucias frequently in his Latin verse, as Mr. Gray calls him Favonius.

passing through here, in their way to Italy and the south, which at present happen to be near thirty in number. It is a fortnight since we set out from hence upon a little excursion to Geneva. We took the longest road, which lies, through Savoy, on purpose to see a famous monastery, called the Grand Chartreuse, and had no reason to think our time lost. After having travelled seven days very slow (for we did not change horses, it being impossible for a chaise to go post in these roads) we arrived at a little village among the mountains of Savoy, called Echelles; from thence we proceeded on horses, who are used to the way, to the mountain of the Chartreuse. It is six miles to the top; the road runs winding up it, commonly not six feet broad; on one hand is the rock, with woods of pine-trees hanging over head; on the other a monstrous precipice, almost perpendicular, at the bottom of which rolls a torrent, that sometimes tumbling among the fragments of stone that have fallen from on high, and sometimes precipitating itself down vast descents with a noise like thunder, which is still made greater by the echo from the mountains on each side, concurs to form one of the most solemn, the most romantic, and the most astonishing scenes I ever beheld. Add to this the strange views made by the crags and cliffs on the other hand; the cascades that in many places throw themselves from the very summit down into the vale, and the river below; and many other particulars impossible to describe; you will conclude we had no occasion to repent our pains. This place St. Bruno chose to retire to, and upon its very top founded the aforesaid convent, which is the superior of the whole order. When we came there, the two fathers, who are commissioned to entertain strangers (for the rest must neither speak one to another, or to any one else,) received us very kindly; and set before us a repast of dried fish, eggs, butter and fruits, all excellent in their kind, and extremely neat. They pressed us to spend the night there, and to stay some days with them; but this we could not do, so they led us about their house, which is, you must think, like a little city; for there are 100 fathers, besides 300 servants, that make their clothes, grind their corn, press their wine, and do every thing among themselves. The whole is quite orderly and simple; nothing of finery, but the wonderful decency, and the strange situation, more than supply the place of it. In the evening we descended by the same way, passing through many clouds that were then forming themselves on the mountain's side. Next day we continued our journey by Chamberry, which, though the chief city of the duchy, and residence of the king of Sardinia, when he comes into this part of his dominions, makes but a very mean and insignificant appearance; we lay at Aix, once famous for its hot baths, and the next night at Annecy: the day after, by noon, we got to Geneva. I have not time to say any thing about it, nor of our solitary journey back again. * * *

TO HIS FATHER.

Lyons, Oct. 25, N. S. 1739.

IN my last I gave you the particulars of our little journey to Geneva; I have only to add, that we stayed about a week, in order to see Mr. Conway settled there. I do not wonder so many English choose it for their residence; the city is very small, neat, prettily built, and extremely populous; the Rhône runs through the middle of it, and it is surrounded with new fortifications, that give it a military compact air; which, joined to the happy, lively countenances of the inhabitants, and an exact discipline always as strictly observed as in time of war, makes the little republic appear a match for a much greater power; though perhaps Geneva, and all that belongs to it, are not of equal extent with Windsor and its two parks. To one that has passed through Savoy, as we did, nothing can be more striking than the contrast, as soon as he approaches the town. Near the gates of Geneva runs the torrent Arve, which separates it from the king of Sardinia's dominions; on the other side of it lies a country naturally, indeed, fine and fertile; but you meet with nothing in it but meagre, ragged, bare-footed peasants, with their children, in extreme misery and nastiness: and even of these no great numbers. You no sooner have crossed the stream I have mentioned, but poverty is no more; not a beggar, hardly a discontented face to be seen, numerous, and well-dressed people swarming on the ramparts; drums beating, soldiers well-clothed and armed, exercising; and folks, with business in their looks, hurrying to and fro; all contribute to make any person, who is not blind, sensible what a difference is between the two governments, that are the causes of one view and the other. The beautiful lake, at one end of which the town is situated; its extent; the several states that border upon it; and all its pleasures, are too well known for me to mention them. We sailed upon it as far as the dominions of Geneva extend, that is, about two leagues and a half on each side; and landed at several of the little houses of pleasure that the inhabitants have built all about it, who received us with much politeness. The same night we eat part of a trout, taken in the lake, that weighed thirty-seven pounds: as great a monster as it appeared to us, it was esteemed there nothing extraordinary, and they assured us, it was not uncommon to catch them of fifty pounds: they are dressed here, and sent post to Paris upon some great occasions; nay, even to Madrid, as we were told. The road we returned through was not the

same we came by; we crossed the Rhone at Seyssel, and passed for three days among the mountains of Bugey, without meeting with any thing new; at last we came out into the plains of La Bresse, and so to Lyons again. Sir Robert has written to Mr. Walpole, to desire he would go to Italy, which he has resolved to do; so that all the scheme of spending the winter in the south of France is laid aside, and we are to pass it in a much finer country. You may imagine I am not sorry to have this opportunity of seeing the place in the world that best deserves it: besides, as the pope, who is eighty-eight, and has been lately at the point of death, can not probably last a great while, perhaps we may have the fortune to be present at the election of a new one, when Rome will be in all its glory. Friday next we certainly begin our journey; in two days we shall come to the foot of the Alps, and six more we shall be in passing them. Even here the winter is begun; what then must it be among those vast snowy mountains where it is hardly ever summer? We are, however, as well armed as possible against the cold, with muffs, hoods, and masks of beaver, fur-boots, and bear skins. When we arrive at Turin, we shall rest after the fatigues of the journey. * * *

TO HIS MOTHER.

Turin, Nov. 7, N. S. 1739.

I AM this night arrived here, and have just sat down to rest me after eight days' tiresome journey: for the three first we had the same road we before passed through to go to Geneva; the fourth we turned out of it, and for that day and the next travelled rather among than upon the Alps; the way commonly running through a deep valley by the side of the river Arc, which works itself a passage, with great difficulty and a mighty noise, among vast quantities of rocks, that have rolled down from the mountain tops. The winter was so far advanced, as in great measure to spoil the beauty of the prospect; however, there was still somewhat fine remaining amidst the savageness and horror of the place. The sixth we began to go up several of these mountains; and as we were passing one, met with an odd accident enough: Mr. Walpole had a little fat black spaniel, that he was very fond of, which he sometimes used to set down, and let it run by the chaise side. We were at that time in a very rough road, not two yards broad at most; on one side was a great wood of pines, and on the other a vast precipice; it was noon-day, and the sun shone bright, when all of a sudden, from the wood-side, (which was as steep upwards as the other part was downwards) out rushed a great wolf, came close to the head of the horses, seized the dog by the throat, and rushed up the hill again with him in his mouth. This was done in less than a quarter of a minute; we all saw it, and yet the servants had no time to draw their pistols, or to do any thing to save the dog If he had not been there, and the creature had thought it fit to lay hold of one of the horses, chaise, and we, and all must inevitably have tumbled above fifty fathoms perpendicular down the precipice. The seventh we came to Lanebourg, the last town in Savoy; it lies at the foot of the famous Mount Cenis, which is so situated as to allow no room for any way but over the very top of it. Here the chaise was forced to be pulled to pieces, and the baggage and that to be carried by mules: we ourselves were wrapped up in our furs, and seated upon a sort of matted chair without legs, which is carried upon poles in the manner of a bier, and so begun to ascend by the help of eight men. It was six miles to the top, where a plain opens itself about as many more in breadth, covered perpetually with very deep snow, and in the midst of that a great lake of unfathomable depth, from whence a river takes its rise, and tumbles over monstrous rocks quite down the other side of the mountain. The descent is six miles more, but infinitely more steep than the going up: and here the men perfectly fly down with you, stepping from stone to stone with incredible swiftness in places where none but they could go three paces without falling. The immensity of the precipices, the roaring of the river and torrents that run into it, the huge crags covered with ice and snow, and the clouds below you and about you, are objects it is impossible to conceive without seeing them; and though we had heard many strange descriptions of the scene, none of them at all came up to it. We were but five hours in performing the whole, from which you may judge of the rapidity of the men's motion. We are now got into Piedmont, and stopped a little while at La Ferriere, a small village about three quarters of the way down, but still among the clouds, where we began to hear a new language spoken round about us; at last we got quite down, went through the Pas de Suse, a narrow road among the Alps, defended by two fortresses, and lay at Bossolens: next evening through a fine avenue of nine miles in length, a straight as a line, we arrived at this city, which, as you know, is the capital of the principality, and the residence of the king of Sardinia.* * * We shall stay here, I believe, a fortnight, and proceed for Genoa, which is three or four days' journey, to go post. I am, &c.

* * * That part of the letter here omitted, contained only a description of the city; which, as Mr. Gray has given it to Mr. West in the following letter, and that in a more lively manner, I thought it unnecessary to insert; a liberty I have taken in other parts of this correspondence, in order to avoid repetition

TO MR. WEST.

Turin, Nov. 16, N. S. 1739.

AFTER eight days' journey through Greenland, we arrived at Turin—you approach it by a handsome avenue of nine miles long, and quite straight. The entrance is guarded by certain vigilant dragoons, called Douaniers, who mumbled us for some time. The city is not large, as being a place of strength, and consequently confined within its fortifications: it has many beauties and some faults; among the first are streets all laid out by the line, regular uniform buildings, fine walks that surround the whole; and in general a good lively clean appearance: but the houses are of brick, plastered, which is apt to want repairing; the windows of oiled paper, which is apt to be torn; and every thing very slight, which is apt to tumble down. There is an excellent opera, but it is only in the carnival: balls every night, but only in the carnival: masquerades too, but only in the carnival. This carnival lasts only from Christmas to Lent; one half of the remaining part of the year is passed in remembering the last, the other in expecting the future carnival. We can not well subsist upon such slender diet, no more than upon an execrable Italian comedy, and a puppet show, called Rappresentazione d'un' anima dannata, which, I think, are all the present diversions of the place; except the Marquise de Cavaillac's conversazione, where one goes to see people play at ombre and taroc, a game with seventy-two cards all painted with suns, and moons, and devils, and monks. Mr. Walpole has been at court; the family are at present at a country palace, called La Venerie. The palace here in town is the very quintessence of gilding and looking-glass; inlaid floors, carved panels, and painting wherever they could stick a brush. I own I have not, as yet, any where met with those grand and simple works of art, that are to amaze one, and whose sight one is to be the better for: but those of nature have astonished me beyond expression. In our little journey up to the Grande Chartreuse I do not remember to have gone ten paces without an exclamation, that there was no restraining. Not a precipice, not a torrent, not a cliff, but is pregnant with religion and poetry. There are certain scenes that would awe an atheist into belief, without the help of other argument. One need not have a very fantastic imagination to see spirits there at noon-day: you have death perpetually before your eyes; only so far removed, as to compose the mind without frighting it. I am well persuaded St. Bruno was a man of no common genius, to choose such a situation for his retirement; and perhaps should have been a disciple of his, had I been born in his time. You may believe Abelard and Heloïse were not forgot upon this occasion: if I do not mistake, I saw you too every now and then at a distance among the trees; *il me semble, que j'ai vu ce chien de visage là quelque part.* You seemed to call to me from the other side of the precipice, but the noise of the river below was so great, that I really could not distinguish what you said; it seemed to have a cadence like verse. In your next you will be so good to let me know what it was. The week we have since passed among the Alps, has not equalled the single day upon that mountain, because the winter was rather too far advanced, and the weather a little foggy. However, it did not want its beauties; the savage rudeness of the view is inconceivable without seeing it: I reckoned, in one day, thirteen cascades, the least of which was, I dare say, one hundred feet in height. I had Livy in the chaise with me, and beheld his "*Nives cælo prope immistæ, tecta informia imposita rupibus, pecora jumentaque torrida frigore, homines intonsi et inculti, animalia inanimaque omnia rigentia gelu; omnia confragosa, præruptaque.*" The creatures that inhabit them are, in all respects, below humanity; and most of them, especially women, have the tumidum guttur, which they call goscia. Mont Cenis, I confess, carries the permission mountains have of being frightful rather too far; and its horrors were accompanied with too much danger to give one time to reflect upon their beauties. There is a family of the Alpine monsters I have mentioned, upon its very top, that in the middle of winter calmly lay in their stock of provisions and firing, and so are buried in their hut for a month or two under the snow. When we were down it, and a little way into Piedmont, we began to find "*Apricos quosdam colles, rivosque prope silvas, et jam humano cultu digniora loca.*" I read Silius Italicus too, for the first time; and wished for you, according to custom.—We set out for Genoa in two days' time.

TO MR. WEST.

Genoa, Nov. 21, 1738.

Horridos tractus, Boreæque linquens
Regna Taurini fera, molliorem
Advehor brumam, Genuæque amantes
Litora soles.

AT least, if they do not, they have a very ill taste; for I never beheld any thing more amiable: only figure to yourself a vast semicircular basin, full of fine blue sea, and vessels of all sorts and sizes, some sailing out, some coming in, and others at anchor; and all around it palaces and churches peeping over one another's heads, gardens, and marble terraces full of orange and cypress trees, fountains, and trellis-works covered with vines, which altogether compose the grandest of theatres. This is the first coup d'œil, and is almost all I am

yet able to give you an account of, for we arrived late last night. To-day was, luckily, a great festival, and in the morning we resorted to the church of the Madonna delle Vigne, to put up our little orisons; (I believe I forgot to tell you that we have been sometime converts to the holy catholic church,) we found our lady richly drest out, with a crown of diamonds on her head, another upon the child's, and a constellation of wax lights burning before them: shortly after came the doge, in his robes of crimson damask, and a cap of the same, followed by the senate in black. Upon his approach, began a fine concert of music, and among the rest two eunuchs' voices, that were a perfect feast to ears that had heard nothing but French operas for a year. We listened to this, and breathed nothing but incense for two hours. The doge is a very tall, lean, stately, old figure, called Contantino Balbi; and the senate seem to have been made upon the same model. They said their prayers, and heard an absurd white friar preach, with equal devotion. After this we went to the Annonciata, a church built by the family Lomellini, and belonging to it; which is, indeed, a most stately structure! the inside wholly marble of various kinds, except where gold and painting take its place.—From hence to the palazzo Doria. I should make you sick of marble, if I told you how it was lavished here upon the porticos, the ballustrades, and terraces, the lowest of which extends quite to the sea. The inside is by no means answerable to the outward magnificence; the furniture seems to be as old as the founder of the family.* Their great embossed silver tables tell you, in bas-relief, his victories at sea, how he entertained the emperor Charles, and how he refused the sovereignty of the commonwealth when it was offered him; the rest is old-fashioned velvet chairs, and Gothic tapestry. The rest of the day has been spent, much to our hearts' content, in cursing French music and architecture, and in singing the praises of Italy. We find this place so very fine, that we are in fear of finding nothing finer. We are fallen in love with the Mediterranean sea, and hold your lakes and your rivers in vast contempt. This is

"The happy country where huge lemons grow,"

as Waller says; and I am sorry to think of leaving it in a week for Parma, although it be

The happy country where huge cheeses grow.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Bologna, Dec. 9, N. S. 1739.

OUR journey hither has taken up much less time than I expected. We left Genoa (a charming place and one that deserved a longer stay) the week before last; crossed the mountains, and lay that night at Tortona, the next at St. Giovanni, and the morning after came to Piacenza. That city, (though the capital of a dutchy) made so frippery an appearance, that instead of spending some days there, as had been intended, we only dined, and went on to Parma; stayed there all the following day, which was passed in visiting the famous works of Corregio in the Dome, and other churches.—The fine gallery of pictures, that once belonged to the Dukes of Parma, is no more here; the King of Naples has carried it all thither, and the city had not merit enough to detain us any longer, so we proceeded through Reggio to Modena; this, though the residence of its duke, is an ill-built melancholy place, all of brick, as are most of the towns in this part of Lombardy: he himself lives in a private manner, with very little appearance of a court about him; he has one of the noblest collections of paintings in the world, which entertained us extremely well the rest of that day and part of the next: and in the afternoon we came to Bologna: so now you may wish us joy of being in the dominions of his Holiness. This is a populous city, and of great extent: all the streets have porticos on both sides, such as surround a part of Covent Garden, a great relief in summer time in such a climate; and from one of the principal gates to a church of the Virgin, (where is a wonder-working picture, at three miles distance) runs a corridor of the same sort, lately finished, and, indeed, a most extraordinary performance. The churches here are more remarkable for their paintings than architecture, being mostly old structures of brick; but the palaces are numerous, and fine enough to supply us with somewhat worth seeing from morning till night. The country of Lombardy, hitherto, is one of the most beautiful imaginable; the roads broad, exactly straight, and on either hand vast plantations of trees, chiefly mulberries and olives, and not a tree without a vine twining about it and spreading among its branches. This scene, indeed, which must be the most lovely in the world during the proper season, is at present all deformed by the winter, which here is rigorous enough for the time it lasts; but one still sees the skeleton of a charming place, and reaps the benefit of its product; for the fruits and provisions are admirable: in short, you find every thing that luxury can desire, in perfection. We have now been here a week, and shall stay some little time longer. We are at the foot of the Appenine mountains; it will take up three days to cross them, and then we shall come to Florence, where we shall pass the Christmas. Till then we must remain in a state of ignorance as to what is doing in England, for our letters are to meet us there: if I do not find four or five from you alone I shall wonder.

* The famous Andrea Doria.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Florence, Dec. 19, N. S. 1739.

WE spent twelve days at Bologna, chiefly (as most travellers do) in seeing sights; for as we knew no mortal there, and as it is no easy matter to get admission into any Italian house, without very particular recommendations, we could see no company but in public places; and there are none in that city but the churches. We saw, therefore, churches, palaces, and pictures from morning to night; and the 15th of this month set out for Florence, and began to cross the Appenine mountains: we travelled among and upon them all that day, and, as it was but indifferent weather, were commonly in the middle of thick clouds, that utterly deprived us of a sight of their beauties: for this vast chain of hills has its beauties, and all the vallies are cultivated; even the mountains themselves are many of them so within a little of their very tops. They are not so horrid as the Alps, though pretty near as high; and the whole road is admirably well kept, and paved throughout, which is a length of fourscore miles, and more. We left the Pope's dominions, and lay that night in those of the Grand Duke of Fiorenzuola, a paltry little town, at the foot of mount Giogo, which is the highest of them all. Next morning we went up it; the post house is upon its very top, and usually involved in clouds, or half buried in the snow. Indeed there was none of the last at the time we were there, but it was still a dismal habitation. The descent is most excessively steep, and the turnings very short and frequent: however we performed it without any danger, and in coming down could dimly discover Florence, and the beautiful plain about it, through the mists; but enough to convince us, it must be one of the noblest prospects upon earth in summer. That afternoon we got thither: and Mr. Mann,* the resident, had sent his servant to meet us at the gates, and conduct us to his house. He is the best and most obliging person in the world. The next night we were introduced at the Prince of Craon's assembly (he has the chief power here in the Grand Duke's absence).—The princess and he were extremely civil to the name of Walpole, so we were asked to stay supper, which is as much as to say, you may come and sup here whenever you please; for after the first invitation this is always understood. We have also been at the Countess Suarez's, a favourite of the late duke, and one that gives the first movement to every thing gay that is going forward here. The news is every day expected from Vienna of the great duchess's delivery; if it be a boy, here will be all sorts of balls, masquerades, operas, and illuminations; if not, we must wait for the carnival, when all those things come of course. In the mean time, it is impossible to want entertainment; the famous gallery, alone, is an amusement for months: we commonly pass two or three hours every morning in it, and one has perfect leisure to consider all its beauties. You know it contains many hundred antique statues, such as the whole world can not match, beside the vast collection of paintings, medals, and precious stones, such as no other prince was ever master of; in short, all that the rich and powerful house of Medicis has, in so many years, got together. And besides this city abounds with so many palaces and churches, that you can hardly place yourself any where without having some fine one in view, or at least some statue or fountain, magnificently adorned; these undoubtedly are far more numerous than Genoa can pretend to; yet, in its general appearance I can not think that Florence equals it in beauty. Mr. Walpole is just come from being presented to the electress palatine dowager; she is a sister of the late great duke's; a stately old lady, that never goes out but to church, and then she has guards, and eight horses to her coach. She received him with ceremony, standing under a huge black canopy, and, after a few minutes' talking, she assured him of her good will, and dismissed him; she never sees any body but thus in form; and so she passes her life, * poor woman! * * *

* Afterwards Sir Horace Mann.

TO MR. WEST.

Florence, Jan. 15, 1740.

I THINK I have not yet told you how we left that charming place Genoa; how we crossed a mountain all of green marble, called Buchetto; how we came to Tortona, and waded through the mud to come to Castel St. Giovanni, and there eat mustard and sugar with a dish of crows gizzards: secondly, how we passed the famous plains

> Qua trebie glaucas salices intersecat undâ,
> Arvaque Romanis nobilitata malis.
> Visus adhuc amnis veteri de clade rubere,
> Et suspirantes ducere mœstus aquas;
> Maurorumque ala, et nigræ increbrescere turmæ,
> Et pulsa Ausonidum ripa sonare fugâ.

Nor, thirdly, how we passed through Piacenza, Parma, Modena, entered the territories of the pope; stayed twelve days at Bologna; crossed the Appenines, and afterwards arrived at Florence. None of these things have I told you, nor do I intend to tell you, till you ask me some questions concerning them. No, not even of Florence itself, except that it is at fine as possible, and has every

* Persons of very high rank, and withal very good sense, will only feel the pathos of this exclamation.

thing in it can bless the eyes. But, before I enter into particulars, you must make your peace both with me and the Venus de Medicis, who, let me tell you, is highly and justly offended at you for not inquiring, long before this, concerning her symmetry and proportions. * * *

TO HIS MOTHER.

Florence, March 19, 1740.

THE pope* is at last dead, and we are to set out for Rome on Monday next. The conclave is still sitting there, and likely to continue so some time longer, as the two French cardinals are but just arrived, and the German ones are still expected. It agrees mighty ill with those that remain enclosed: Ottoboni is already dead of an apoplexy; Altieri and several others are said to be dying, or very bad: yet it is not expected to break up till after Easter. We shall be at Sienna the first night, spend a day there, and in two more go to Rome. One begins to see in this country the first promises of an Italian spring, clear unclouded skies, and warm suns, such as are not often felt in England; yet, for your sake, I hope at present you have your proportion of them, and that all your frosts, and snows, and short-breaths, are by this time utterly vanished. I have nothing new or particular to inform you of; and, if you see things at home go on much in their old course, you must not imagine them more various abroad. The diversions of a Florentine Lent are composed of a sermon in the morning, full of hell and the devil; a dinner at noon, full of fish and meagre diet; and, in the evening what is called a conversazione, a sort of assembly at the principal people's houses, full of I can not tell what; besides this, there is twice a week a very grand concert. * * *

TO HIS MOTHER.

Rome, April 2, N. S. 1740.

THIS is the third day since we came to Rome, but the first hour I have had to write to you in. The journey from Florence cost us four days, one of which was spent at Sienna, an agreeably clean, old city, of no great magnificence or extent; but in a fine situation and good air. What it has most considerable is its cathedral, a huge pile of marble, black and white laid alternately, and laboured with a Gothic niceness and delicacy in the old fashioned way. Within too are some paintings and sculpture of considerable hands. The sight of this and some collections that were showed us in private houses, were a sufficient employment for the little time we were to pass there; and the next morning we set forward on our journey through a country very oddly composed; for some miles you have a continual scene of little mountains cultivated from top to bottom with rows of olive trees, or else elms, each of which has its vine twining about it, and mixing with the branches; and corn sown between all the ranks. This, diversified with numerous small houses and convents, makes the most agreeable prospect in the world: but, all of a sudden, it alters to black barren hills, as far as the eye can reach, that seem never to have been capable of culture, and are as ugly as useless. Such is the country for some time before one comes to Mount Radicofani, a terrible black hill, on the top of which we were to lodge that night. It is very high, and difficult of ascent; and at the foot of it we were much embarrassed by the fall of one of the poor horses that drew us. This accident obliged another chaise, which was coming down, to stop also; and out of it peeped a figure in a red cloak, with a handkerchief tied round its head, which, by its voice and mien, seemed a fat old woman; but upon its getting out, appeared to be Senesino, who was returning from Naples to Sienna, the place of his birth and residence. On the highest part of the mountain is an old fortress, and near it a house built by one of the grand dukes for a hunting-seat, but now converted into an inn: it is the shell of a large fabric; but such an inside, such chambers and accommodations that your cellar is a palace in comparison: and your cat sups and lies much better than we did; for it being a saint's eve, there was nothing but eggs. We devoured our meagre fare; and, after stopping up the windows with the quilts, were obliged to lie upon the straw beds in our clothes. Such are the conveniences in a road, that is, as it were, the great thoroughfare of all the world. Just on the other side of this mountain, at Ponte-Centino, one enters the patrimony of the church; a most delicious country, but thinly inhabited. That night brought us to Viterbo, a city of a more lively appearance than any we had lately met with; the houses have glass windows, which is not very usual here; and most of the streets are terminated by a handsome fountain. Here we had the pleasure of breaking our fast on the leg of an old hare and some broiled crows. Next morning, in descending Mount Viterbo, we first discovered (though at near thirty miles distance) the cupola of St. Peter's, and a little after began to enter on an old Roman pavement, with now and then a ruined tower, or a sepulchre on each hand. We now had a clear view of the city, though not to the best advantage, as coming along a plain quite upon a level with it; however, it appeared very vast, and surrounded with magnificent villas and gardens. We soon after crossed the Tiber, a river that ancient Rome made more considerable than any men

* Clement the Twelfth.

of its own could have done: however, it is not contemptibly small, but a good handsome stream; very deep, yet somewhat of a muddy complexion. The first entrance of Rome is prodigiously striking. It is by a noble gate, designed by Michael Angelo, and adorned with statues; this brings you into a large square, in the midst of which is a vast obelisk of granite, and in front you have at one view two churches of a handsome architecture, and so much alike, that they are called the Twins; with three streets, the middlemost of which is one of the longest in Rome. As high as my expectation was raised, I confess, the magnificence of this city infinitely surpasses it. You can not pass along a street, but you have views of some palace, or church, or square, or fountain, the most picturesque and noble one can imagine. We have not yet set about considering its beauties, ancient and modern, with attention; but have already taken a slight transient view of some of the most remarkable. St. Peter's I saw the day after we arrived, and was struck dumb with wonder. I there saw the cardinal D'Auvergne, one of the French ones, who, upon coming off his journey, immediately repaired hither to offer up his vows at the high altar, and went directly into the conclave; the doors of which we saw opened to him, and all the other immured cardinals came thither to receive him. Upon his entrance they were closed again directly. It is supposed they will not come to an agreement about a pope till after Easter, though the confinement is very disagreeable. I have hardly philosophy enough to see the infinity of fine things, that are here daily in the power of any body that has money, without regretting the want of it; but custom has the power of making things easy to one. I have not yet seen his majesty of Great Britain, &c. though I have the two boys in the gardens of the Villa Borgese, where they go a shooting almost every day; it was at a distance, indeed, for we did not choose to meet them, as you may imagine. This letter (like all those the English send, or receive) will pass through the hands of that family, before it comes to those it was intended for. They do it more honour than it deserves; and all they will learn from thence will be, that I desire you to give my duty to my father, and wherever else it is due, and that I am, &c.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Rome, April 15, 1740. Good-Friday.

TO-DAY I am just come from paying my adorations at St. Peter's to three extraordinary relics, which are exposed to public view only on these two days in the whole year, at which time all the confraternities in the city come in procession to see them. It was something extremely novel to see that vast church, and the most magnificent in the world, undoubtedly, illuminated (for it was night) by thousands of little crystal lamps, disposed in the figure of a huge cross at the high altar, and seeming to hang alone in the air. All the light proceeded from this, and had the most singular effect imaginable as one entered the great door. Soon after came one after another, I believe, thirty processions, all dressed in linen frocks, and girt with a cord, their heads covered with a cowl all over, only two holes to see through left. Some of them were all black, others red, others white, others party-coloured; these were continually coming and going with their tapers and crucifixes before them; and to each company, as they arrived and knelt before the great altar, were shown from a balcony, at a great height, the three wonders, which are, you must know, the head of the spear that wounded Christ; St. Veronica's handkerchief, with the miraculous impression of his face upon it: and a piece of the true cross, on the sight of which the people thump their breasts, and kiss the pavement with vast devotion. The tragical part of the ceremony is half a dozen wretched creatures, who, with their faces covered, but naked to the waist, are in a side-chapel disciplining themselves with scourges full of iron prickles; but really in earnest, as our eyes can testify, which saw their backs and arms so raw, we should have taken it for a red satin doublet torn, and showing the skin through, had we not been convinced of the contrary by the blood which was plentifully sprinkled about them. It is late; I give you joy of Porto-Bello, and many other things, which I hope are all true. * * *

TO MR. WEST.

Tivoli, May 20, 1740.

THIS day being in the palace of his highness the duke of Modena, he laid his most serene commands upon me to write to Mr. West, and said he thought it for his glory, that I should draw up an inventory of all his most serene possessions for the said West's perusal.———Imprimis, a house, being in circumference a quarter of a mile, two feet and an inch; the said house containing the following particulars, to wit, a great room. Item, another great room; item, a bigger room; item, another room; item, a vast room; item, a sixth of the same; a seventh ditto; an eighth as before; a ninth as abovesaid; a tenth (see No. 1.;) item, ten more such, besides twenty besides, which not to be too particular, we shall pass over. The said rooms contain nine chair, two tables, five stools, and a cricket. From whence we shall proceed to the garden, containing two millions of superfine laurel hedges, a clump of cypress trees, and half the river Teverone, that pisses into two thousand several chamberpots

Finis.—Dame Nature desired me to put in a list of her little goods and chattels, and, as they were small, to be very minute about them. She has built here three or four little mountains, and laid them out in an irregular semicircle; from certain others behind, at a greater distance, she has drawn a canal, into which she has put a little river of hers, called Anio; she has cut a huge cleft between the two innermost of her four hills, and there she has left it to its own disposal; which she has no sooner done, but, like a heedless chit, it tumbles headlong down a declivity fifty feet perpendicular, breaks itself all to shatters, and is converted into a shower of rain, where the sun forms many a bow, red, green, blue, and yellow. To get out of our metaphors without any further trouble, it is the most noble sight in the world. The weight of that quantity of waters, and the force they fall with, have worn the rocks they throw themselves among into a thousand irregular crags, and to a vast depth. In this channel it goes boiling along with a mighty noise till it comes to another steep, where you see it a second time come roaring down (but first you must walk two miles farther) a greater height than before, but not with that quantity of waters; for by this time it has divided itself, being crossed and opposed by the rocks, in four several streams, each of which, in emulation of the great one, will tumble down too; and it does tumble down, but not from an equally elevated place; so that you have at one view all these cascades intermixed with groves of olive and little woods, the mountains rising behind them, and on the top of one (that which forms the extremity of one of the half-circle's horns) is seated the town itself. At the very extremity of that extremity, on the brink of the precipice, stands the Sibyl's temple, the remains of a little rotunda, surrounded with its portico, above half of whose beautiful Corinthian pillars are still standing and entire; all this on one hand. On the other, the open campagna of Rome, here and there a little castle on a hillock, and the city itself on the very brink of the horizon, indistinctly seen (being eighteen miles off) except the dome of St. Peter's; which, if you look out of your window, wherever you are, I suppose, you can see. I did not tell you that a little below the first fall, on the side of the rock, and hanging over that torrent, are little ruins which they show you for Horace's house, a curious situation to observe the

> "Præceps Anio, et Tiburni lucus, et uda
> Mobilibus pomaria rivis."

Mæcenas did not care for such a noise, it seems, and built him a house (which they also carry one to see) so situated that it sees nothing at all of the matter, and for any thing he knew there might be no such river in the world. Horace had another house on the other side of the Teverone, opposite to Mæcenas's; and they told us there was a bridge of communication, by which "*andava il detto Signor per trastullarsi coll istesso Orazio.*" In coming hither we crossed the Aquæ Albulæ, a vile little brook that stinks like a fury, and they say it has stunk so these thousand years. I forget the Piscina of Quintilius Varus, where he used to keep certain little fishes. This is very entire, and there is a piece of the aqueduct that supplied it too; in the garden below is old Rome, built in little, just as it was, they say. There are seven temples in it, and no houses at all: they say there were none.

May 21.

We have had the pleasure of going twelve miles out of our way to Palestrina. It has rained all day as if heaven and us were coming together. See my honesty, I do not mention a syllable of the temple of Fortune, because I really did not see it; which, I think, is pretty well for an old traveller. So we returned along the Via Prænestina, saw the Lacus Gabinus and Regillus, where, you know, Castor and Pollux appeared upon a certain occasion. And many a good old tomb we left on each hand, and many an aqueduct,

> Dumb are whose fountains, and their channels dry.

There are, indeed, two whole modern ones, works of popes, that run about thirty miles a-piece in length; one of them convey still the famous Aqua Virgo to Rome, and adds vast beauty to the prospect. So we came to Rome again, where waited for us a splendidissimo regalo of letters: in one of which came You, with your huge characters and wide intervals, staring. I would have you to know, I expect you should take a handsome crow-quill when you write to me, and not leave room for a pin's point in four sides of a sheet royal. Do you but find matter, I will find spectacles.

I have more time than I thought, and I will employ it in telling you about a ball that we were at the other evening. Figure to yourself a Roman villa; all its little apartments thrown open, and lighted up to the best advantage. At the upper end of the gallery, a fine concert, in which La Diamantina, a famous virtuoso, played on the violin divinely, and sung angellically; Giovannino and Pasqualini (great names in musical story) also performed miraculously. On each side were ranged all the secular grand monde of Rome, the ambassadors, princesses, and all that. Among the rest Il Serenissimo Pretendente (as the Montova gazette calls him) displayed his rueful length of person, with his two young ones, and all his ministry around him. "*Poi nacque un grazioso ballo,*" where the world danced, and I sat in a corner regaling myself with iced fruits, and other pleasant rinfrescatives.

TO MR. WEST.

Rome, May, 1740.

I AM to-day just returned from Alba, a good deal fatigued; for you know the Appian is somewhat tiresome.* We dined at Pompey's; he indeed was gone for a few days to his Tusculan, but, by the care of his villicus, we made an admirable meal. We had the dugs of a pregnant sow, a peacock, a dish of thrushes, a noble scarus, just fresh from the Tyrrhene, and some conchylia of the lake with garum sauce: for my part I never eat better at Lucullus's table. We drank half a dozen cyathi a-piece of ancient Alban to Pholoë's health: and, after bathing, and playing an hour at ball, we mounted our essedum again, and proceeded up the mount to the temple. The priests there entertained us with an account of a wonderful shower of birds' eggs, that had fallen two days before, which had no sooner touched the ground, but they were converted into gudgeons; as also that the night past a dreadful voice had been heard out of the adytum, which spoke Greek during a full half hour, but nobody understood it. But quitting my Romanities, to your great joy and mine, let me tell you, in plain English, that we come from Albano. The present town lies within the enclosure of Pompey's villa in ruins. The Appian way runs through it, by the side of which, a little farther, is a large old tomb, with five pyramids upon it, which the learned suppose to be the burying-place of the family, because they do not know whose it can be else. But the vulgar assure you it is the sepulchre of the Curiatii, and by that name (such is their power) it goes. One drives to Castel Gondolfo, a house of the Pope's, situated on the top of one of the Collinette, that forms a brim to the basin commonly called the Alban lake. It is seven miles round; and directly opposite to you, on the other side, rises the Mons Albanus, much taller than the rest, along whose side are still discoverable (not to common eyes) certain little ruins of the old Alba Longa. They had need be very little, as having been nothing but ruins ever since the days of Tullus Hostilius. On its top is a house of the constable Colonna's where stood the temple of Jupiter Latialis. At the foot of the hill Gondolfo, are the famous outlets of the lake, built with hewn stone, a mile and a half under ground. Livy, you know, amply informs us of the foolish occasion of this expense, and gives me this opportunity of displaying all my erudition, that I may appear considerable in your eyes. This is the prospect from one window of the palace. From another you have the whole campagna, the city, Antium, and the Tyrrhene sea (twelve miles distant) so distinguishable, that you may see the vessels sailing upon it. All this is charming. Mr. Walpole says our memory sees more than our eyes in this country, which is extremely true; since, for realities, Windsor, or Richmond Hill, is infinitely preferable to Albano or Frescati. I am now at home, and going to the window to tell you it is the most beautiful of Italian nights, which, in truth, are but just begun, (so backward has the spring been here, and every where else, they say). There is a moon! there are stars for you! Do not you hear the fountain? Do not you smell the orange flowers? That building yonder is the convent of St. Isidore; and that eminence, with the cypress trees and pines upon it, the top of M. Quirinal.—This is all true, and yet my prospect is not two hundred yards in length. We send you some Roman inscriptions to entertain you. The first two are modern, transcribed from the Vatican Library by Mr. Walpole.

Pontifices olim quem fundavere priores,
Præcipua Sixtus perficit arte tholum;*
Et Sixti tantum se gloria tollit in altum,
Quantum se Sixti nobile tollit opus:
Magnus bonos magni fundamina ponere templi,
Sed finem cœptis ponere major honos.

Saxa agit Amphion, Thebana utimœnia condat:
Sixtus et immensæ pondera molis agit.†
Saxa trahunt ambo longe diversa: sed arte
Hæc trahit Amphion; Sixtus et arte trahit.
At tantum exsuperat Dircæum Amphiona Sixtus,
Quantum hic exsuperat cætera saxa lapis.

Mine is ancient, and I think not less curious. It is exactly transcribed from a sepulchral marble at the villa Giustiniani. I put stops to it, when I understand it.

DIs Manibus
Claudiae, Pistes
Primus Conjugi
Optumæ, Sanctae,
Et Piae, Benemeritate.

Non æquos, Parcae, statuistis stamina vitæ.
Tam bene compositos potuistis sede tenere.
Amissa est conjux, cur ego et ipse moror?
Si · bella · esse · mi · iste · mea · vivere · debuit ·
Tristia contigerunt qui amissa conjuge vivo.
Nil est tam miserum, quam totam perdere vitam.
Nec vita enasci dura peregistis crudelia pensa, sorores,
Ruptaque deficiunt in primo munere fusi.
O nimis injustæ ter denos dare munus in annos,
Deceptus · grautus · fatum · sic · pressit · egestas ·
Dum vitam tulero, Primus Pistes lugea conjugium.

* However whimsical this humour may appear to some readers, I chose to insert it, as it gives me an opportunity of remarking that Mr. Gray was extremely skilled in the customs of the ancient Romans; and has catalogued, in his common-place book, their various eatables, wines, perfumes, clothes, medicines, &c. with great precision, referring under every article to passages in the poets and historians where there names are mentioned.

* Sixtus V. built the dome of St. Peter's.
† He raised the obelisk in the great area.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Naples, June 17, 1740.

OUR journey hither was through the most beautiful part of the finest country in the world; and every spot of it, on some account or other, famous for these three thousand years past.* The season has hitherto been just as warm as one would wish it; no unwholesome airs, or violent heats, yet heard of. The people call it a backward year, and are in pain about their corn, wine, and oil; but we, who are neither corn, wine, nor oil, find it very agreeable. Our road was through Villetri, Cisterna, Terracina, Capua, and Aversa, and so to Naples. The minute one leaves his holiness's dominions, the face of things begins to change from wide uncultivated plains to olive groves and well-tilled fields of corn, intermixed with ranks of elms, every one of which has its vine twining about it, and hanging in festoons between the rows from one tree to another. The great old fig-trees, the oranges in full bloom, and myrtles in every hedge, make one of the delightfulest scenes you can conceive; besides that, the roads are wide, well-kept, and full of passengers, a sight I have not beheld this long time. My wonder still increased upon entering the city, which, I think, for number of people, outdoes both Paris and London. The streets are one continued market, and thronged with populace so much that a coach can hardly pass. The common sort are a jolly lively kind of animals, more industrious than Italians usually are; they work till evening; then take their lute or guitar (for they all play) and walk about the city, or upon the seashore with it, to enjoy the fresco. One sees their little brown children jumping about stark-naked, and the bigger ones dancing with castanets, while others play on the cymbal to them. Your maps will show you the situation of Naples; it is on the most lovely bay in the world, and one of the calmest seas: it has many other beauties besides those of nature. We have spent two days in visiting the remarkable places in the country round it, such as the bay of Baiæ, and its remains of antiquity; the lake Avernus, and the Solfatara, Charon's grotto, &c. We have been in the Sibyl's cave and many other strange holes under ground (I only name them, because you may consult Sandy's travels;) but the strangest hole I ever was in, has been to-day, of a place called Portici, where his Sicilian Majesty has a country-seat. About a year ago, as they were digging, they discovered some parts of ancient buildings above thirty feet deep in the ground: curiosity led them on, and they have been digging ever since; the passage they have made, with all its turnings and windings, is now more than a mile long. As you walk, you see parts of an amphitheatre, many houses adorned with marble columns, and incrusted with the same; the front of a temple, several arched vaults of rooms painted in fresco. Some pieces of painting have been taken out from hence, finer than any thing of the kind before discovered, and with these the king has adorned his palace; also a number of statues, medals, and gems; and more are dug out every day. This is known to be a Roman town,* that in the emperor Titus's time was overwhelmed by a furious eruption of Mount Vesuvius, which is hard by. The wood and beams remain so perfect that you may see the grain; but burnt to a coal, and dropping into dust upon the least touch. We were to-day at the foot of that mountain, which at present only smokes a little, where we saw the materials that fed the stream of fire, which about four years since ran down its side. We have but a few days longer to stay here; too little in conscience for such a place. * * *

* Mr Gray wrote a minute description of every thing he saw in this tour from Rome to Naples; as also of the environs of Rome, Florence, &c. But as these papers are apparently only memorandums for his own use, I do not think it necessary to print them, although they abound with many uncommon remarks, and pertinent classical quotations.

TO HIS FATHER.

Florence, July 16, 1740.

AT my return to this city, the day before yesterday, I had the pleasure of finding yours dated June the 9th. The period of our voyages, at least towards the South, is come as you wish. We have been at Naples, spent nine or ten days there, and returned to Rome, where finding no likelihood of a pope yet these three months, and quite wearied with the formal assemblies, and little society of that great city, Mr. Walpole determined to return hither to spend the summer, where he imagines he shall pass his time more agreeably than in the tedious expectation of what, when it happens, will only be a great show. For my own part, I give up the thoughts of all that with but little regret; but the city itself I do not part with so easily, which alone has amusements for whole years. However, I have passed through all that most people do, both ancient and modern; what that is you may see, better than I can tell you, in a thousand books. The conclave we left in greater uncertainty than ever; the more than ordinary liberty they enjoy there, and the unusual coolness of the season, makes the confinement less disagreeable to them than common, and, consequently, maintains them in their irresolution. There have been very high words, one or two (it is said) have come even to blows; two more are dead within this last month, Cenci and Portia; the latter died distracted; and

* It should seem, by the omission of its name that it was not then discovered to be Herculaneum.

we left another (Altiera) at the extremity: yet nobody dreams of an election till the latter end of September. All this gives great scandal to all good catholics, and every body talks very freely on the subject. The Pretender (whom you desire an account of) I have had frequent opportunities of seeing at church, at the corso, and other places; but more particularly, and that for a whole night, at a great ball given by Count Patrizii to the prince and princess Craon, (who were come to Rome at that time, that he might receive from the hands of the emperor's ministers there the order of the golden fleece) at which he and his two sons were present. They are good fine boys, especially the younger, who has the more spirit of the two, and both danced incessantly all night long. For him, he is a thin ill-made man, extremely tall and awkward, of a most unpromising countenance, a good deal resembling king James the Second, and has extremely the air and look of an idiot, particularly when he laughs or prays. The first he does not often, the latter continually. He lives private enough with his little court about him, consisting of Lord Dunbar, who manages every thing, and two or three of the Preston Scotch lords, who would be very glad to make their peace at home.

We happened to be at Naples on Corpus Christi day, the greatest feast in the year, so had an opportunity of seeing their Sicilian majesties to advantage. The king walked in the grand procession, and the queen (being big with child) sat in a balcony. He followed the host to the church of St. Clara, where high mass was celebrated to a glorious concert of music. They are as ugly a little pair as one can see: she a pale girl, marked with the small-pox; and he a brown boy with a thin face, a huge nose, and as ungain as possible.

We are settled here with Mr. Mann, in a charming apartment; the river Arno runs under our windows, which we can fish out of. The sky is so serene, and the air so temperate, that one continues in the open air all night long in a slight night gown, without any danger; and the marble bridge is the resort of every body, where they hear music, eat iced fruits, and sup by moonlight; though as yet (the season being extremely backward every where) these amusements are not begun. You see we are now coming northward again, though in no great haste; the Venetian and Milanese territories, and either Germany or the south of France (according to the turn the war may take,) are all that remain for us, that we have not yet seen; as to Loretto, and that part of Italy, we have given over all thoughts of it.

FROM MR. WEST.

Bond-street, June 5th, 1740.

I LIVED at the Temple till I was sick of it: I have just left it, and find myself as much a lawyer as I was when I was in it. It is certain, at least, I may study the law here as well as I could there My being in chambers did not signify to me a pinch of snuff. They tell me my father was a lawyer, and, as you know, eminent in the profession; and such a circumstance must be of advantage to me. My uncle too makes some figure in Westminster-hall; and there's another advantage: then my grand-father's name would get me many friends. Is it not strange that a young fellow, that might enter the world with so many advantages, will not know his own interest? &c. &c. What shall I say in answer to all this? For money, I neither dote upon it nor despise it; it is a necessary stuff enough. For ambition, I do not want that neither; but it is not to sit upon a bench. In short, is it not a disagreeable thing to force one's inclination, especially when one 's young? not to mention that one ought to have the strength of a Hercules to go through our common law; which, I am afraid, I have not. Well! but then, say they, if one profession does not suit you, you may choose another more to your inclination. Now I protest I do not yet know my own inclination, and I believe, if that was to be my direction, I should never fix at all. There is no going by a weather-cock. I could say much more upon this subject; but there is no talking tête-à-tête cross the Alps. Oh, the folly of young men, that never know their own interest! they never grow wise till they are ruined! and then nobody pities them, nor helps them. Dear Gray! consider me in the condition of one that has lived these two years without any person that he can speak freely to. I know it is very seldom that people trouble themselves with the sentiments of those they converse with; so they can chat about trifles, they never care whether your heart aches or no. Are you one of these? I think not. But what right have I to ask you this question? Have we known one another enough, that I should expect or demand sincerity from you? Yes, Gray, I hope we have; and I have not quite such a mean opinion of myself, as to think I do not deserve it. But, signor, is it not time for me to ask something about your future intentions abroad? Where do you propose going next? an in Apuliam? *nam illo si advenceris, tanquam Ulysses, cognosces tuorum neminem. Vale.* So Cicero prophesies in the end of one of his letters—and there I end.

Yours, &c.

TO MR. WEST.

Florence, July 16, 1740.

You do yourself and me justice, in imagining that you merit, and that I am capable of sincerity

I have not a thought, or even a weakness, I desire to conceal from you; and consequently on my side deserve to be treated with the same openness of heart. My vanity perhaps might make me more reserved towards you, if you were one of the heroic race, superior to all human failings; but as mutual wants are the ties of general society, so are mutual weaknesses of private friendships, supposing them mixed with some proportion of good qualities; for where one may not sometimes blame, one does not much care ever to praise. All this has the air of an introduction designed to soften a very harsh reproof that is to follow; but it is no such matter: I only meant to ask, why did you change your lodgings? Was the air bad, or the situation melancholy? If so, you are quite in the right. Only, is it not putting yourself a little out of the way of a people, with whom it seems necessary to keep up some sort of intercourse and conversation, though but little for your pleasure or entertainment (yet there are, I believe, such among them as might give you both,) at least for your information in that study, which, when I left you, you thought of applying to? for that there is a certain study necessary to be followed, if we mean to be of any use in the world, I take for granted; disagreeable enough (as most necessities are,) but, I am afraid, unavoidable. Into how many branches these studies are divided in England, every body knows; and between that which you and I had pitched upon, and the other two, it was impossible to balance long. Examples show one that it is not absolutely necessary to be a blockhead to succeed in this profession. The labour is long, and the elements dry and unentertaining; nor was ever any body (especially those that afterwards made a figure in it) amused, or even not disgusted, in the beginning; yet, upon a further acquaintance, there is surely matter for curiosity and reflection. It is strange if, among all that huge mass of words, there be not somewhat intermixed for thought. Laws have been the result of long deliberation, and that not of dull men, but the contrary; and have so close a connexion with history, nay, with philosophy itself, that they must partake a little of what they are related to so nearly. Besides, tell me, have you ever made the attempt? Were not you frighted merely with the distant prospect? Had the Gothic character and bulkiness of those volumes (a tenth part of which perhaps it will be no further necessary to consult, than as one does a dictionary) no ill effect upon your eye? Are you sure, if Coke had been printed by Elzevir, and bound in twenty neat pocket volumes, instead of one folio, you should never have taken him up for an hour, as you would a Tully, or drank your tea over him? I know how great an obstacle ill spirits are to resolution. Do you really think, if you rid ten miles every morning, in a week's time you should not entertain much stronger hopes of the chancellorship, and think it a much more probable thing than you do at present? The advantages you mention are not nothing; our inclinations are more than we imagine in our own power; reason and resolution determine them, and support under many difficulties. To me there hardly appears to be any medium between a public life and a private one; he who prefers the first, must put himself in a way of being serviceable to the rest of mankind, if he has a mind to be of any consequence among them: nay, he must not refuse being in a certain degree even dependent upon some men who already are so. If he has the good fortune to light on such as will make no ill use of his humility, there is no shame in this: if not, his ambition ought to give place to a reasonable pride, and he should apply to the cultivation of his own mind those abilities which he has not been permitted to use for others' service. Such a private happiness (supposing a small competence of fortune) is almost always in every one's power, and the proper enjoyment of age, as the other is the employment of youth. You are yet young, have some advantages and opportunities, and an undoubted capacity, which you have never yet put to the trial. Set apart a few hours, see how the first year will agree with you, at the end of it you are still the master; if you change your mind, you will only have got the knowledge of a little somewhat that can do no hurt, or give you cause of repentance. If your inclination be not fixed upon any thing else, it is a symptom that you are not absolutely determined against this, and warns you not to mistake mere indolence for inability. I am sensible there is nothing stronger against what I would persuade you to than my own practice; which may make you imagine I think not as I speak. Alas! it is not so; but I do not act what I think, and I had rather be the object of your pity than that you should be that of mine; and, be assured, the advantage I may receive from it, does not diminish my concern in hearing you want somebody to converse with freely, whose advice might be of more weight, and always at hand. We have some time since come to the southern period of our voyages; we spent about nine days at Naples. It is the largest and most populous city, as its environs are the most deliciously fertile country, of all Italy. We sailed in the bay of Baiæ, sweated in the Solfatara, and died in the grotto del Cane, as all strangers do; saw the Corpus Christi procession, and the king and the queen, and the city underground (which is a wonder I reserve to tell you of another time) and so returned to Rome for another fortnight; left it (left Rome!) and came hither for the summer. You have seen an Epi-

tle* to Mr. Ashton, that seems to me full of spirit and thought, and a good deal of poetic fire. I would know your opinion. Now I talk of verses, Mr. Walpole and I have frequently wondered you should never mention a certain imitation of Spencer, published last year by a namesake† of yours, with which we are all enraptured and enmarvailed.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Florence, Aug. 21, N. S. 1740.

It is some time since I have had the pleasure of writing to you, having been upon a little excursion cross the mountains to Bologna. We set out from hence at sunset, passed the Apennines by moonlight, travelling incessantly till we came to Bologna at four in the afternoon next day. There we spent a week agreeably enough, and returned as we came. The day before yesterday arrived the news of a pope: and I have the mortification of being within four days' journey of Rome, and not seeing his coronation, the heats being violent, and the infectious air now at its height. We had an instance, the other day, that it is not only fancy. Two country-fellows, strong men, and used to the country about Rome, having occasion to come from thence hither, and travelling on foot, as common with them, one died suddenly on the road; the other got hither, but extremely weak, and in a manner stupid; he was carried to the hospital, but died in two days. So, between fear and laziness, we remain here, and must be satisfied with the accounts other people give us of the matter. The new pope is called Benedict XIV. being created cardinal by Benedict XIII. the last pope but one. His name is Lambertini, a noble Bolognese, and archbishop of that city. When I was first there, I remember to have seen him two or three times; he is a short, fat man, about sixty-five years of age, of a hearty, merry countenance, and likely to live some years. He bears a good character for generosity, affability, and other virtues; and, they say, wants neither knowledge nor capacity. The worst side of him is, that he has a nephew or two; besides a certain young favourite, called Melara, who is said to have had, for some time, the arbitrary disposal of his purse and family. He is reported to have made a little speech to the cardinals in the conclave, while they were undetermined about an election, as follows: "Most eminent lords, here are three Bolognese of different characters, but all equally proper for the popedom. If it be your pleasure to pitch upon a saint, there is cardinal Gotti; if upon a politician, there is Aldrovandi; if upon a booby, here am I." The Italian is much more expressive, and, indeed not to be translated; wherefore, if you meet with any body that understands it, you may show them what he said in the language he spoke it. "*Eminssimi. Sigri. Ci siamo tré, diversi sì, mà tutti idonei al Papato. Se vi piace un Santo, c' è l'Gotti; se volete una testa scaltra, e Politica, c' è l'Aldrovandé; se un Coglione, ecco mi!*" Cardinal Coscia is restored to his liberty, and, it is said, will be to all his benefices. Corsini (the late pope's nephew) as he has had no hand in this election, it is hoped, will be called to account for all his villanous practices The Pretender, they say, has resigned all his pretensions to his eldest boy, and will accept of the grand chancellorship, which is thirty thousand crowns a-year; the pension he has at present is only twenty thousand. I do not affirm the truth of this last article; because, if he does, it is necessary he should take the ecclesiastical habit, and it will sound mighty odd to be called his majesty the chancellor.—So ends my gazette.

TO HIS FATHER.

Florence, Oct. 9, 1740.

The beginning of next spring is the time determined for our return at furthest; possibly it may be before that time. How the interim will be employed, or what route we shall take, is not so certain. If we remain friends with France, upon leaving this country we shall cross over to Venice, and so return through the cities north of the Po to Genoa; from thence take a felucca to Marseilles, and come back through Paris. If the contrary fall out, which seems not unlikely, we must take the Milanese, and those parts of Italy, in our way to Venice; from thence must pass through the Tyrol into Germany, and come home by the Low-Countries. As for Florence, it has been gayer than ordinary for this last month, being one round of balls and entertainments, occasioned by the arrival of a great Milanese lady; for the only thing the Italians shine in, is their reception of strangers. At such times every thing is magnificence: the more remarkable, as in their ordinary course of life they are parsimonious, even to a degree of nastiness. I saw in one of the vastest palaces in Rome, that of prince Pamfilio, the apartment which he himself inhabited, a bed that most servants in England would disdain to lie in, and furniture much like that of a soph at Cambridge, for convenience and neatness. This man is worth 30,000*l.* sterling a year. As for eating, there are not two cardinals in Rome that allow more than six paoli, which is three shillings a day, for the expense of their table; and you may imagine they are still less ex-

* The reader will find this among Mr. Walpole's Fugitive Pieces.

† "On the Abuse of Travelling," by Gilbert West.

travagant here than there. But when they receive a visit from any friend, their houses and persons are set out to the greatest advantage, and appear in all their splendour; it is, indeed, from a motive of vanity, and with the hopes of having it repaid them with interest, whenever they have occasion to return the visit. I call visits going from one city of Italy to another; for it is not so among acquaintance of the same place on common occasions. The new pope has retrenched the charges of his own table to a sequin (ten shillings) a meal. The applause which all he says and does meet with, is enough to encourage him really to deserve fame. They say he is an able and honest man: he is reckoned a wit too. The other day, when the senator of Rome came to wait upon him, at the first compliments he made him, the pope pulled off his cap. His master of the ceremonies, who stood by his side, touched him softly, as to warn him that such a condescension was too great in him, and out of all manner of rule. Upon which he turned to him, and said, "Oh! I cry you mercy, good master: it is true, I am but a novice of a pope; I have not yet so much as learned ill manners." * * *

TO HIS FATHER.

Florence, Jan. 12, 1741.

WE still continue constant at Florence, at present one of the dullest cities in Italy. Though it is the middle of the carnival, there are no public diversions; nor is masquerading permitted as yet. The emperor's obsequies are to be celebrated publicly on the 16th of this month; and after that, it is imagined every thing will go on in its usual course. In the mean time, to employ the minds of the populace, the government has thought fit to bring into the city in a solemn manner, and at a great expense, a famous statue of the Virgin, called the Madonna dell' Impruneta, from the place of her residence, which is upon a mountain seven miles off. It never has been practised but at times of public calamity; and was done at present to avert the ill effects of a late great inundation, which it was feared might cause some epidemical distemper. It was introduced a fortnight ago in procession, attended by the council of regency, the senate, the nobility, and all the religious orders, on foot and bare-headed, and so carried to the great church, where it was frequented by an infinite concourse of people from all the country round. Among the rest, I paid my devotions almost every day, and saw numbers of people possessed with the devil, who were brought to be exorcised. It was indeed in the evening, and the church-doors were always shut before the ceremonies were finished, so that I could not be eye-witness of the event; but that they were all cured is certain, for one never heard any more of them the next morning. I am to-night just returned from seeing our lady make her exit with the same solemnities she entered. The show had a finer effect than before; for it was dark, and every body (even those of the mob that could afford it) bore a white wax flambeaux. I believe there were at least five thousand of them, and the march was near three hours in passing before the window. The subject of all this devotion is supposed to be a large tile with a rude figure in bas-relief upon it. I say supposed, because since the time it was found (for it was found in the earth in ploughing) only two people have seen it; the one was, by good luck, a saint; the other was struck blind for his presumption. Ever since she has been covered with seven veils; nevertheless, those who approach her tabernacle cast their eyes down, for fear they should spy her through all her veils. Such is the history, as I had from the lady of the house where I stood to see her pass; with many other circumstances: all of which she firmly believes, and ten thousand besides.

We shall go to Venice in about six weeks, or sooner. A number of German troops are upon their march into this state, in case the King of Naples thinks proper to attack it. It is certain that he asked the Pope's leave for his troops to pass through his country. The Tuscans in general are much discontented, and foolish enough to wish for a Spanish government, or any rather than this. * * *

TO MR. WEST.

Florence, April 21, 1741.

I KNOW not what degree of satisfaction it will give you to be told that we shall set out from hence the 24th of this month, and not stop above a fortnight at any place in our way. This I feel, that you are the principal pleasure I have to hope for in my own country. Try at least to make me imagine myself not indifferent to you; for I must own I have the vanity of desiring to be esteemed by somebody, and would choose that somebody should be one whom I esteem as much as I do you. As I am recommending myself to your love, methinks I ought to send you my picture (for I am no more what I was, some circumstances excepted, which I hope I need not particularize to you); you must add then, to your former idea, two years of age, a reasonable quantity of dulness, a great deal of silence, and something that rather resembles, than is, thinking; a confused notion of many strange and fine things that have swum before my eyes for some time, a want of love for general society, indeed, an inability to it. On the good

side you may add a sensibility for what others feel, and indulgence for their faults or weaknesses, a love of truth, and detestation of every thing else. Then you are to deduct a little impertinence, a little laughter, a great deal of pride, and some spirits. These are all the alterations I know of, you perhaps may find more. Think not that I have been obliged for this reformation of manners to reason or reflection, but to a severer school-mistress, experience. One has little merit in learning her lessons, for one can not well help it; but they are more useful than others, and imprint themselves in the very heart. I find I have been haranguing in the style of the son of Sirach, so shall finish here, and tell you that our route is settled as follows: first to Bologna for a few days, to hear the Viscontina sing; next to Reggio, where is a fair. Now, you must know, a fair here, is not a place where one eats gingerbread or rides upon hobby-horses; here are no musical clocks, nor tall Leicestershire women; one has nothing but masquing, gaming, and singing. If you love operas, there will be the most splendid in Italy, four tip-top voices, a new theatre, the duke and dutchess in all their pomps and vanities. Does not this sound magnificent? Yet is the city of Reggio but one step above old Brentford. Well; next, to Venice by the 11th of May, there to see the old Doge wed the Adriatic whore. Then to Verona, so to Milan, so to Marseilles, so to Lyons, so to Paris, so to West, &c. in *sæcula sæculorum*. Amen.

Eleven months, at different times, have I passed at Florence; and yet (God help me) know not either people or language. Yet the place and the charming prospects demand a poetical farewell, and here it is.

* * Oh Fæsulæ amœna
Frigoribus juga, nec nimium spirantibus auris,
Alma quibus Tusci Pallas Deus Apennini
Esse dedit, glaucaque sua canescere silva!
Non ego vos posthac Arni de valle videbo
Porticibus circum, et candenti cincta corona
Villarum longe nitido consurgere dorso,
Antiquamve ædem, et veteres præferre cupressus
Mirabor, tectisque super pendentia tecta.

I will send you, too, a pretty little sonnet of a Signor Abbate Buondelmonte, with my imitation of it.

Spesso Amor sotto la forma
D'amista ride, e s'asconde:
Poi si mischia, e si confonde
Con lo sdegno, e col rancor.
In Pietade ei si transforma;
Par trastullo, e par dispetto:
Ma nel suo diverso aspetto:
Sempr'egli, e l'istesso Amor.

Lusit amicitiæ interdum velatus amictu,
Et bene, composita veste fefellit Amor.
Mox iræ assumsit cultus, faciemque minantem,
Inque odium versus, versus et in lacrymas:
Tudentem fuge, nec lacrymanti, aut crede furenti;
Idem est dissimili semper in ore Deus.

Here comes a letter from you.—I must defer giving my opinion of Pausanias* till I can see the whole, and only have said what I did in obedience to your commands. I have spoken with such freedom on this head, that it seems but just you should have your revenge; and therefore I send you the beginning, not of an epic poem, but of a metaphysic one.† Poems and metaphysics (say you, with your spectacles on) are inconsistent things. A metaphysical poem is a contradiction in terms. It is true, but I will go on. It is Latin too, to increase the absurdity. It will, I suppose, put you in mind of the man who wrote a treatise of canon law in hexameters. Pray help me to the description of a mixed mode, and a little episode about space.

Mr. Walpole and Mr. Gray set out from Florence at the time specified in the foregoing letter. When Mr. Gray left Venice, which he did the middle of July following, he returned home through Padua, Verona, Milan, Turin, and Lyons; from all which places he writ either to his father or mother with great punctuality: but merely to inform them of his health and safety; about which (as might be expected) they were now very anxious, as he travelled with only a "*Laquais de Voyage*." These letters do not even mention that he went out of his way to make a second visit to the Grande Chartreuse, and there wrote in the Album of the Fathers the Alcaic Ode;

Oh Tu, severi Religio loci, &c.—*See Poems.*

He was at Turin the 15th of August, and began to cross the Alps the next day. On the 25th he reached Lyons; therefore it must have been between these two dates that he made this visit.

FROM MR. WEST.

I WRITE to make you write, for I have not much to tell you. I have recovered no spirits as yet,‡ but, as I am not displeased with my company, I sit purring by the fireside in my arm-chair with no small satisfaction. I read too sometimes, and have begun Tacitus, but have not yet read enough to judge of him; only his Pannonian sedition in the first book of his annals, which is just as far

* Some part of a tragedy under that title, which Mr. West had begun.

† The beginning of the first book of a didactic poem, "De Principiis Cogitandi."—*See Poems.*

‡ The distresses of Mr. West's mind had already too far affected a body, from the first weak and delicate. His health declined daily, and, therefore, he left town in March, 1742, and, for the benefit of the air, went to David Mitchell's, Esq. at Popes, near Hatfield, Hertfordshire; at whose house he died the 1st of June following.

as I have got, seemed to me a little tedious. I have no more to say, but to desire you will write letters of a handsome length, and always answer me within a reasonable space of time, which I leave to your discretion.

Popes, March 23, 1742.

P. S. The new Dunciad! *qu'en pensez vous?*

TO MR. WEST.*

I TRUST to the country, and that easy indolence you say you enjoy there, to restore you your health and spirits; and doubt not but, when the sun grows warm enough to tempt you from your fireside, you will (like all other things) be the better for his influence. He is my old friend, and an excellent nurse, I assure you. Had it not been for him, life had been often to me intolerable. Pray do not imagine that Tacitus, of all authors in the world, can be tedious. An annalist, you know, is by no means master of his subject; and I think one may venture to say, that if those Pannonian affairs are tedious in his hands, in another's they would have been insupportable. However, fear not, they will soon be over, and he will make ample amends. A man, who could join the *brilliant* of wit and concise sententiousness peculiar to that age, with the truth and gravity of better times, and the deep reflection and good sense of the best moderns, can not choose but have something to strike you. Yet what I admire in him above all this, is his detestation of tyranny, and the high spirit of liberty that every now and then breaks out as it were, whether he would or no. I remember a sentence in his Agricola that (concise as it is) I always admired for saying much in a little compass. He speaks of Domitian, who upon seeing the last will of that general, where he had made him coheir with his wife and daughter, "*Satis constabat lætatum eum, velut honore, judicioque: tam cæca et corrupta mens assiduis adulationibus erat, ut nesciret a bono patre non scribi hæredem, nisi malum principem.*"

As to the Dunciad, it is greatly admired: the genii of Operas and Schools, with their attendants, the pleas of the Virtuosos and Florists, and the yawn of Dulness in the end, are as fine as any thing he has written. The Metaphysician's part is to me the worst; and here and there a few ill expressed lines, and some hardly intelligible.

I take the liberty of sending you a long speech of Agrippina;† much too long, but I would be glad you would retrench it. Aceronia, you may remember, had been giving quiet counsels. I fancy, if it ever be finished, it will be in the nature of Nat. Lee's bedlam tragedy, which had twenty-five acts, and some odd scenes.

* Mr. Gray came to town about the 1st of September, 1741. His father died the 6th of November following, at the age of sixty-five. The latter end of the subsequent year he went to Cambridge to take his bachelor's degree in civil law.

† See Poems

FROM MR. WEST.

Popes, April 4, 1742.

I OWN, in general, I think Agrippina's speech too long; but how to retrench it, I know not: but I have something else to say, and that is in relation to the style, which appears to me too antiquated. Racine was of another opinion: he no where gives you the phrases of Ronsard: his language is the language of the times, and that of the purest sort; so that his French is reckoned a standard. I will not decide what style is fit for our English stage: but I should rather choose one that bordered upon Cato, than upon Shakspeare. One may imitate (if one can) Shakspeare's manner, his surprising strokes of true nature, his expressive force in painting characters, and all his other beauties; preserving, at the same time, our own language. Were Shakspeare alive now, he would write in a different style from what he did. These are my sentiments upon these matters: perhaps I am wrong, for I am neither a Tarpa, nor am I quite an Aristarchus. You see I write freely both of you and Shakspeare; but it is as good as writing not freely, where you know it is acceptable.

I have been tormented within this week with a most violent cough; for when once it sets up its note, it will go on, cough after cough, shaking and tearing me for half an hour together; and then it leaves me in a great sweat, as much fatigued as if I had been labouring at the plough. All this description of my cough in prose, is only to introduce another description of it in verse, perhaps not worth your perusal; but it is very short, and besides has this remarkable in it, that it was the production of four o'clock in the morning, while I lay in my bed tossing and coughing, and all unable to sleep.

> Ante omnes morbos importunissima tussis,
> Qua durare datur, traxitque sub illa vires:
> Dura etenim versans imo sub pectore regna,
> Perpetuo exercet teneras luctamine costas,
> Oraque distorquet, vocemque immutat anhelam;
> Nec cessare locus: sed sævo concita motu,
> Molle domat latus, et corpus labor omne fatigat:
> Unde molesta dies, noctemque insomnia turbant.
> Nec Tua, si mecum Comes hic jucundus adesses,
> Verba juvare queant, aut hunc lenire dolorem
> Sufficiant tua vox dulcis, nec vultus amatus.

Do not mistake me, I do not condemn Tacitus: I was then inclined to find him tedious: the German sedition sufficiently made up for it; and the speech of Germanicus, by which he reclaims his soldiers, is quite masterly. Your new Dunciad I

have no conception of. I shall be too late for our dinner if I write any more. Yours.

TO DR. WHARTON.*

Cambridge, December 27, 1742.

I ought to have returned you my thanks a long time ago, for the pleasure, I should say prodigy, of your letter; for such a thing has not happened above twice within this last age to mortal man, and no one here can conceive what it may portend. You have heard, I suppose, how I have been employed a part of the time; how, by my own indefatigable application for these ten years past, and by the care and vigilance of that worthy magistrate, the man in blue,† (who, I assure you, has not spared his labour, nor could have done more for his own son) I am got half way to the top of jurisprudence,‡ and bid as fair as another body to open a case of impotency with all decency and circumspection. You see my ambition. I do not doubt but some thirty years hence I shall convince the world and you that I am a very pretty young fellow; and may come to shine in a profession, perhaps the noblest of all, except man-midwifery. As for you, if your distemper and you can but agree about going to London, I may reasonably expect, in a much shorter time, to see you in your three-cornered villa, doing the honours of a well furnished table with as much dignity, as rich a mien, and as capacious a belly, as Dr. Mead. Methinks I see Dr. * *, at the lower end of it, lost in admiration of your goodly person and parts, cramming down his envy (for it will rise) with the wing of a pheasant, and drowning it in neat Burgundy. But not to tempt your asthma too much with such a prospect, I should think you might be almost as happy and as great as this even in the country. But you know best, and I should be sorry to say any thing that might stop you in the career of glory; far be it from me to hamper the wheels of your gilded chariot. Go on, Sir Thomas; and when you die, (for even physicians must die) may the faculty in Warwick-lane erect your statue in the very niche of Sir John Cutler's.

I was going to tell you how sorry I am for your illness, but I hope it is too late now: I can only say that I really was very sorry. May you live a hundred Christmases, and eat as many collars of brawn stuck with rosemary. Adieu, &c.

* Of Old-Park, near Durham. With this gentleman Mr. Gray contracted an acquaintance very early; and though they were not educated at Eton, yet afterwards at Cambridge, when he doctor was fellow of Pembroke-Hall, they became intimate friends, and continued so to the time of Mr. Gray's death.

† A servant of the vice-chancellor's for the time being, usually known by the name of Blue Coat, whose business it is to attend acts for degrees, &c.

‡ i. e. Bachelor of civil law.

TO DR. WHARTON.

Peterhouse, April 26, 1744.

You write so feelingly to Mr. Brown, and represent your abandoned condition in terms so touching, that what gratitude could not effect in several months, compassion has brought about in a few days; and broke that strong attachment, or rather allegiance, which I and all here owe to our sovereign lady and mistress, the president of presidents and head of heads, (if I may be permitted to pronounce her name, that ineffable Octogrammaton) the power of Laziness. You must know she had been pleased to appoint me (in preference to so many old servants of hers who had spent their whole lives in qualifying themselves for the office) grand picker of straws and push-pin player to her supinity, (for that is her title.) The first is much in the nature of lord president of the council; and the other like the groom-porter, only without the profit; but as they are both things of very great honour in this country, I consider with myself the load of envy attending such great charges; and besides (between you and me) I found myself unable to support the fatigue of keeping up the appearance that persons of such dignity must do; so I thought proper to decline it, and excused myself as well as I could. However, as you see such an affair must take up a good deal of time, and it has always been the policy of this court to proceed slowly, like the Imperial and that of Spain, in the dispatch of business you will on this account the easier forgive me, if I have not answered your letter before.

You desire to know, it seems, what character the poem of your young friend bears here.* I wonder that you ask the opinion of a nation, where those, who pretend to judge, do not judge at all; and the rest (the wiser part) wait to catch the judgment of the world immediately above them; that is, Dick's and the Rainbow Coffee-houses.—Your readier way would be to ask the ladies that keep the bars in those two theatres of criticism. However, to show you that I am a judge, as well as my countrymen, I will tell you, though I have rather turned it over than read it (but no matter; no more have they,) that it seems to me above the middling; and now and then, for a little while, rises even to the best, particularly in description. It is often obscure, and even unintelligible; and too much infected with the Hutchinson jargon. In short, its great fault is, that it was published at

* Pleasures of the Imagination:—From the posthumous publication of Dr. Akenside's Poems, it should seem that the author had very much the same opinion afterwards of his own works which Mr. Gray here expresses; since he undertook a reform of it, which must have given him, had he concluded it, as much trouble as if he had written it entirely new.

least nine years too early. And so methinks in a few words, "*à la mode du Temple*," I have very pertly dispatched what may perhaps for several years have employed a very ingenious man worth fifty of myself.

You are much in the right to have a taste for Socrates; he was a divine man. I must tell you by way of news of the place, that the other day a certain new professor made an apology for him an hour long in the schools; and all the world brought in Socrates guilty, except the people of his own college.

The muse is gone, and left me in far worse company; if she returns, you will hear of her. As to her child* (since you are so good as to inquire after it) it is but a puling chit yet, not a bit grown to speak of; I believe, poor thing, it has got the worms, that will carry it off at last. Mr. Trollope and I are in a course of tar-water; he for his present, and I for my future distempers. If you think it will kill me, send away a man and horse directly; for I drink like a fish.

TO MR. WALPOLE.

Cambridge, Feb. 3, 1746.

YOU are so good to inquire after my usual time of coming to town: it is at a season when even you, the perpetual friend of London, will, I fear, hardly be in it—the middle of June: and I commonly return hither in September; a month when I may more probably find you at home.

Our defeat to be sure is a rueful affair for the honour of the troops; but the duke is gone it seems with the rapidity of a cannon-bullet to undefeat us again. The common people in town at least know how to be afraid; but we are such *uncommon* people here as to have no more sense of danger, than if the battle had been fought when and where the battle of Cannæ was. The perception of these calamities and of their consequences, that we are supposed to get from books, is so faintly impressed, that we talk of war, famine, and pestilence, with no more apprehension than of a broken head, or of a coach overturned between York and Edinburgh. I heard three people, sensible middle aged men (when the Scotch were said to be at Stanford, and actually were at Derby,) talking of hiring a chaise to go to Caxton (a place in the high road) to see the Pretender and the highlanders as they passed.

I can say no more for Mr. Pope (for what you keep in reserve may be worse than all the rest.) It is natural to wish the finest writer, one of them, we ever had, should be an honest man. It is for the interest even of that virtue, whose friend he professed himself, and whose beauties he sung, that he should not be found a dirty animal. But, however, this is Mr. Warburton's business, not mine, who may scribble his pen to the stumps and all in vain, if these facts are so. It is not from what he told me about himself that I thought well of him, but from a humanity and goodness of heart, ay, and greatness of mind, that runs through his private correspondence, not less apparent than are a thousand little vanities and weaknesses mixed with those good qualities; for nobody ever took him for a philosopher.

If you know any thing of Mr. Mann's state of health and happiness, or the motions of Mr. Chute homewards, it will be a particular favour to inform me of them, as I have not heard this half-year from them.

* His poem "De Principiis Cogitandi."

TO DR. WHARTON.

Cambridge, December 11, 1746.

I WOULD make you an excuse (as indeed I ought,) if they were a sort of thing I ever gave any credit to myself in these cases; but I know they are never true. Nothing so silly as indolence when it hopes to disguise itself; every one knows it by its saunter, as they do his majesty (God bless him) at a masquerade, by the firmness of his tread and the elevation of his chin. However, somewhat I had to say that has a little shadow of reason in it. I have been in town (I suppose you know) flaunting about at all kind of public places with two friends lately returned from abroad. The world itself has some attractions in it to a solitary of six years' standing: and agreeable well-meaning people of sense (thank heaven there are so few of them) are my peculiar magnet. It is no wonder then if I felt some reluctance at parting with them so soon; or if my spirits, when I returned back to my cell, should sink for a time, not indeed to storm and tempest, but a good deal below changeable. Besides, Seneca says (and my pitch of philosophy does not pretend to be much above Seneca,) "*Nunquam mores, quos extuli, refero. Aliquid ex eo quod composui, turbatur: aliquid ex his, quæ fugavi, redit.*" And it will happen to such as us, mere imps of science. Well it may, when wisdom herself is forced often

> In sweet retired solitude
> To plume her feathers, and let grow her wings,
> That in the various bustle of resort
> Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impaired

It is a foolish thing that without money one can not either live as one pleases, or where and with whom one pleases. Swift somewhere says, that money is liberty; and I fear money is friendship too and society, and almost every external blessing It is a great, though an ill-natured, comfort, to see

most of those who have it in plenty, without pleasure, without liberty, and without friends.

I am not altogether of your opinion as to your historical consolation in time of trouble: a calm melancholy it may produce, a stiller sort of despair (and that only in some circumstances, and on some constitutions;) but I doubt no real comfort or content can ever arise in the human mind, but from hope.

I take it very ill you should have been in the twentieth year of the war,* and yet say nothing of the retreat before Syracuse: is it, or is it not, the finest thing you ever read in your life? And how does Xenophon or Plutarch agree with you? For my part I read Aristotle, his poetics, politics, and morals; though I do not well know which is which. In the first place, he is the hardest author by far I ever meddled with. Then he has a dry conciseness that makes one imagine one is perusing a table of contents rather than a book: it tastes for all the world like chopped hay, or rather like chopped logic; for he has a violent affection to that art, being in some sort his own invention; so that he often loses himself in little trifling distinctions and verbal niceties; and, what is worse, leaves you to extricate him as well as you can. Thirdly, he has suffered vastly from the transcribblers, as all authors of great brevity necessarily must. Fourthly and lastly, he has abundance of fine uncommon things, which makes him well worth the pains he gives one. You see what you are to expect from him.

TO MR. WALPOLE.

January, 1747.

IT is doubtless an encouragement to continue writing to you, when you tell me you answer me with pleasure: I have another reason which would make me very copious, had I any thing to say: it is, that I write to you with equal pleasure, though not with equal spirits, nor with like plenty of materials: please to subtract then so much for spirit, and so much for matter; and you will find me, I hope, neither so slow, nor so short, as I might otherwise seem. Besides, I had a mind to send you the remainder of Agrippina, that was lost in a wilderness of papers. Certainly you do her too much honour: she seemed to me to talk like an *Oldboy*, all in figures and mere poetry, instead of nature and the language of real passion. Do you remember *Approchez-vous*,† *Neron*.—Who would not rather have thought of that half line than all Mr. Rowe's flowers of eloquence? However, you will find the remainder here at the end in an outrageous long speech: it was begun about four years ago (it is a misfortune you know my age, else I might have added, when I was very young.) Poor West put a stop to that tragic torrent he saw breaking in upon him:—have a care, I warn you not to set open the flood-gate again, lest it drown you and me and the bishop and all.

I am very sorry to hear you treat philosophy and her followers like a parcel of monks and hermits, and think myself obliged to vindicate a profession I honour, *bien que je n'en tienne pas boutique*.* (as Madame Sevigné says.) The first man that ever bore the name, if you remember, used to say, that life was like the Olympic games (the greatest public assembly of his age and country,) where some came to show their strength and agility of body, as the champions; others, as the musicians, orators, poets, and historians, to show their excellence in those arts; the traders to get money; and the better sort, to enjoy the spectacle, and judge of all these. They did not then run away from society for fear of its temptations: they passed their days in the midst of it: conversation was their business: they cultivated the arts of persuasion, on purpose to show men it was their interest, as well as their duty, not to be foolish, and false, and unjust; and that too in many instances with success: which is not very strange; for they showed by their life that their lessons were not impracticable; and that pleasures were no temptations, but to such as wanted a clear perception of the pains annexed to them.* But I have done speaking à la Grecque. Mr. Ratcliffe† made a shift to behave very rationally without their instructions, at a season which they took a great deal of pains to fortify themselves and others against: one would not desire to lose one's head with a better grace. I am particularly satisfied with the humanity of that last embrace to all the people about him. Sure it must be somewhat embarrassing to die before so much good company!

You need not fear but posterity will be ever glad to know the absurdity of their ancestors; the foolish will be glad to know they were as foolish as they, and the wise will be glad to find themselves wiser. You will please all the world then; and if you recount miracles you will be believed so much the sooner. We are pleased when we wonder; and we believe because we are pleased. Folly and wisdom, and wonder and pleasure, join with

* Thucydides, l, vii.

† Agrippina, in Racine's tragedy of Britannicus. B.

* Never, perhaps, was a more admirable picture drawn of *true* philosophy and its real and important services; services not confined to the speculative opinions of the studious, but adapted to the common purposes of life, and promoting the general happiness of mankind; not upon the chimerical basis of a system, but on the immutable foundations of truth and virtue. B.

† Brother to the earl of Derwentwater. He was executed at Tyburn, December, 1746, for having been concerned in the rebellion in Scotland. B.

me in desiring you would continue to entertain them: refuse us, if you can. Adieu, dear Sir!

TO MR. WALPOLE.

Cambridge, March 1, 1747.

As one ought to be particularly careful to avoid blunders in a compliment of condolence, it would be a sensible satisfaction to me (before I testify my sorrow, and the sincere part I take in your misfortune) to know for certain, who it is I lament. I knew Zara and Selima, (Selima was it, or Fatima?) or rather I knew them both together; for I can not justly say which was which.—Then as to your handsome cat, the name you distinguish her by, I am no less at a loss, as well knowing one's handsome cat is always the cat one likes best; or, if one be alive and the other dead, it is usually the latter that is the handsomest. Besides, if the point were never so clear, I hope you do not think me so ill-bred or so imprudent as to forfeit all my interest in the surviver: Oh no! I would rather seem to mistake, and imagine to be sure it must be the tabby one that had met with this sad accident. Till this affair is a little better determined, you will excuse me if I do not begin to cry;

"Tempus inane peto, requiem, spatiumque doloris."

Which interval is the more convenient, as it gives time to rejoice with you on your new honours.* This is only a beginning; I reckon next week we shall hear you are a free-mason, or a gormogon at least.—Heigh ho! I feel (as you to be sure have done long since) that I have very little to say, at least in prose. Somebody will be the better for it; I do not mean you, but your cat, feuë mademoiselle Selime, whom I am about to immortalize for one week or fortnight, as follows:† * * *—There's a poem for you; it is rather too long for an epitaph.

TO DR. WHARTON.

Stoke, June 5, 1748.

Your friendship has interested itself in my affairs so naturally, that I can not help troubling you a little with a detail of them.‡ * * * * * * * And now, my dear Wharton, why must I tell you a thing so contrary to my own wishes and yours? I believe it is impossible for me to see you in the north, or to enjoy any of those agreeable hours I had flattered myself with. This business will oblige me to be in town several times during the summer, particularly in August, when half the money is to be paid; besides the good people here would think me the most careless and ruinous of mortals, if I should take such a journey at this time. The only satisfaction I can pretend to, is that of hearing from you, and particularly at this time when I was bid to expect the good news of an increase of your family. Your opinion of Diodorus is doubtless right; but there are things in him very curious, got out of better authorities now lost. Do you remember the Egyptian history, and particularly the account of the gold mines? My own readings have been cruelly interrupted: what I have been highly pleased with, is the new comedy from Paris by Gresset, called le Mechant; if you have it not, buy his works all together in two little volumes: they are collected by the Dutch booksellers, and consequently contain some trash; but then there are the Ververt, the epistle to P. Bougeant, the Chartreuse, that to his sister, an ode on his country, and another on mediocrity, and the Sidnei, another comedy, all which have great beauties. There is also a poem lately published by Thomson, called the Castle of Indolence, with some good stanzas in it. Mr. Mason is my acquaintance; I liked that ode much, but have found no one else that did. He has much fancy, little judgment, and a good deal of modesty; I take him for a good and well-meaning creature; but then he is really in simplicity a child, and loves every body he meets with: he reads little or nothing; writes abundance, and that with a design to make his fortune by it. My best compliments to Mrs. Wharton and your family: does that name include any body I am not yet acquainted with?

TO DR. WHARTON.

Cambridge, August 8, 1749.

I promised Dr. Keene long since to give you an account of our magnificence here;* but the newspapers and he himself in person, have got the start of my indolence, so that by this time you are well acquainted with all the events that adorned that week of wonders. Thus much I may venture to tell you, because it is probable nobody else has done it, that our friend * *'s zeal and eloquence surpassed all power of description. Vesuvio in an eruption was not more violent than his utterance, nor (since I am at my mountains) Pelion, with all

* Mr. Walpole was about this time elected a Fellow of the Royal Society.

† The reader need hardly be told, that the 4th ode in the collection of his poems was inserted in the place of these asterisks. This letter (as some other slight ones have been) is printed chiefly to mark the date of one of his compositions.

‡ The paragraph here omitted contained an account of Mr. Gray's loss of a house by fire in Cornhill, and the expense he should be at in rebuilding it. Though it was insured, he could at this time ill bear to lay out the additional sum necessary for the purpose.

* The Duke of Newcastle's installation as Chancellor of the University.

its pine-trees in a storm of wind, more impetuous than his action; and yet the senate-house still stands, and (I thank God) we are all safe and well at your service. I was ready to sink for him, and scarce dared to look about me, when I was sure it was all over; but soon found I might have spared my confusion; all people joined to applaud him. Every thing was quite right; and I dare swear not three people here but think him a model of oratory; for all the duke's little court came with a resolution to be pleased; and when the tone was once given, the university, who ever wait for the judgment of their betters, struck into it with an admirable harmony: for the rest of the performances, they were just what they usually are. Every one, while it lasted, was very gay and very busy in the morning, and very owlish and very tipsy at night: I make no exceptions from the chancellor to blue-coat. Mason's ode was the only entertainment that had any tolerable elegance; and, for my own part, I think it (with some little abatements) uncommonly well on such an occasion. Pray let me know your sentiments; for doubtless you have seen it. The author of it grows apace into my good graces, as I know him more; he is very ingenious, with great good-nature and simplicity; a little vain, but in so harmless and so comical a way, that it does not offend one at all; a little ambitious, but withal so ignorant in the world and its ways that this does not hurt him in one's opinion; so sincere and so undisguised, that no mind with a spark of generosity, would ever think of hurting him, he lies so open to injury; but so indolent, that if he can not overcome this habit, all his good qualities will signify nothing at all. After all, I like him so well, I could wish you knew him.

TO HIS MOTHER.

Cambridge, Nov. 7, 1749.

The unhappy news I have just received from you equally surprises and afflicts me.* I have lost a person I loved very much, and have been used to from my infancy; but am much more concerned for your loss, the circumstances of which I forbear to dwell upon, as you must be too sensible of them yourself; and will, I fear, more and more need a consolation that no one can give, except He who has preserved her to you so many years, and, at last, when it was his pleasure, has taken her from us to himself; and perhaps, if we reflect upon what she felt in this life, we may look upon this as an instance of his goodness both to her, and to those that loved her. She might have languished many years before our eyes, in a continual increase of pain, and totally helpless; she might have long wished to end her misery without being able to attain it; or perhaps even lost all sense, and yet continued to breathe; a sad spectacle to such as must have felt more for her than she could have done for herself. However you may deplore your own loss, yet think that she is at last easy and happy: and has no more occasion to pity us than we her. I hope, and beg, you will support yourself with that resignation we owe to Him, who gave us our being for our good, and who deprives us of it for the same reason. I would have come to you directly, but you do not say whether you desire I should or not; if you do, I beg I may know it, for there is nothing to hinder me, and I am in very good health.

* The death of his aunt Mrs. Mary Antrobus, who died the 5th of November, and was buried in a vault in Stoke church-yard, near the chancel door, in which also his mother and himself (according to the direction in his will) were afterwards buried.

TO MR. WALPOLE.

Stoke, June 12. 1750.

As I live in a place, where even the ordinary tattle of the town arrives not till it is stale, and which produces no events of its own, you will not desire any excuse from me for writing so seldom, especially as of all people living I know you are the least a friend to letters spun out of one's own brains, with all the toil and constraint that accompanies sentimental productions. I have been here at Stoke a few days (where I shall continue good part of the summer;) and having put an end to a thing, whose beginning you have seen long ago, I immediately sent it you.* You will, I hope, look upon it in the light of a *thing with an end to it;* a merit that most of my writings have wanted, and are like to want, but which this epistle I am determined shall not want, when it tells you that I am ever Yours.

Not that I have done yet; but who could avoid the temptation of finishing so roundly and so cleverly in the manner of good Queen Anne's days? Now I have talked of writings; I have seen a book, which is by this time in the press, against Middleton (though without naming him,) by Asheton. As far as I can judge from a very hasty reading, there are things in it new and ingenious, but rather too prolix, and the style here and there savouring too strongly of sermon. I imagine it will do him credit. So much for other people, now to *self* again. You are desired to tell me your opinion, if you can take the pains, of these lines. I am once more, Ever yours.

* This was the Elegy in the church-yard.—B.

POEMS

OF

THOMAS GRAY.

Odes.

ODE I.

ON THE SPRING.

Lo! where the rosy-bosomed hours,
Fair Venus' train, appear,
Disclose the long-expecting flowers,
And wake the purple year,
The attic warbler pours her throat
Responsive to the cuckoo's note,
The untaught harmony of spring,
While, whispering pleasure as they fly,
Cool zephyrs through the clear blue sky
Their gathered fragrance fling.

Where'er the oak's thick branches stretch
A broader, browner shade,
Where'er the rude and moss-grown beech
O'er-canopies the glade.*
Beside some water's rushy brink
With me the Muse shall sit, and think
(At ease reclined in rustic state)
How vain the ardour of the crowd,
How low, how little, are the proud,
How indigent the great.

Still is the toiling hand of Care,
The panting herds repose,
Yet hark! how through the peopled air,
The busy murmur glows!
The insect youth are on the wing,
Eager to taste the honeyed spring,
And float amid the liquid noon;†
Some lightly o'er the current skim,
Some show their gayly-gilded trim,
Quick-glancing to the sun.‡

To contemplation's sober eye,*
Such is the race of man,
And they that creep and they that fly
Shall end where they began.
Alike the busy and the gay
But flutter through life's little day,
In fortune's varying colours drest;
Brushed by the hand of rough Mischance,
Or chilled by Age, their airy dance
They leave, in dust to rest.

Methinks I hear, in accents low,
The sportive kind reply,
Poor moralist! and what art thou?
A solitary fly!
Thy joys no glittering female meets,
No hive hast thou of hoarded sweets,
No painted plumage to display;
On hasty wings thy youth is flown,
Thy sun is set, thy spring is gone—
We frolic while 'tis May.

ODE II.

ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CAT,
Drowned in a Tub of Gold Fishes.

'Twas on a lofty vase's side,
Where China's gayest art had died
The azure flowers that blow,
Demurest of the tabby kind,
The pensive Selima, reclined,
Gazed on the lake below.

Her conscious tail her joy declared;
The fair round face, the snowy beard,
The velvet of her paws,
Her coat that with the tortoise vies,
Her ears of jet, and emerald eyes,
She saw, and purred applause.

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* ——————a bank
O'er-canopied with luscious woodbine.
Shaksp. Mid. Dream.

† Nare per æstatem liquidam. *Virg. Georg. lib.* 4.

‡ ——————sporting with quick glance,
Show to the sun their waved coats dropt with gold.
Milton's Paradise Lost, b. 7.

* While insects from the threshold preach, &c.
Mr. Green in the Grotto. Dodsley's Miscellanies, vol. v *p.* 161.

Still had she gazed, but, 'midst the tide,
Two angel forms were seen to glide,
The Genii of the stream:
Their scaly armour's Tyrian hue,
Through richest purple, to the view
Betrayed a golden gleam.

The hapless nymph with wonder saw:
A whisker first, and then a claw,
With many an ardent wish,
She stretched in vain to reach the prize:
What female heart can gold despise?
What Cat's averse to fish?

Presumptuous maid! with looks intent,
Again she stretched, again she bent,
Nor knew the gulf between:
(Malignant Fate sat by and smiled,)
The slippery verge her feet beguiled;
She tumbled headlong in.

Eight times emerging from the flood,
She mewed to every watery god
Some speedy aid to send.
No Dolphin came, no Nereid stirred,
Nor cruel Tom or Susan heard:
A fav'rite has no friend!

From hence, ye Beauties! undeceived,
Know one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold:
Not all that tempts your wandering eyes,
And heedless hearts, is lawful prize,
Nor all that glistens gold.

ODE III.

ON A DISTANT PROSPECT OF ETON COLLEGE.

Ye distant Spires! ye antique Towers!
That crown the watery glade
Where grateful science still adores
Her Henry's* holy shade;
And ye that from the stately brow
Of Windsor's heights the expanse below
Of grove, of lawn, of mead, survey,
Whose turf, whose shade, whose flowers among
Wanders the hoary Thames along
His silver-winding way;

Ah happy hills! ah pleasing shade!
Ah fields beloved in vain!
Where once my careless childhood strayed,
A stranger yet to pain!
I feel the gales that from ye blow
A momentary bliss bestow,
As waving fresh their gladsome wing
My weary soul they seem to sooth,
And, redolent† of joy and youth,
To breathe a second spring.

Say, father Thames! for thou hast seen
Full many a sprightly race,
Disporting on thy margent green,
The paths of pleasure trace,
Who foremost now delight to cleave
With pliant arm thy glassy wave?
The captive linnet which enthral?
What idle progeny succeed
To chase the rolling circle's speed,
Or urge the flying ball?

While some, on earnest business bent,
Their murmuring labours ply
'Gainst graver hours, that bring constraint,
To sweeten liberty;
Some bold adventurers disdain
The limits of their little reign,
And unknown regions dare descry
Still as they run they look behind,
They hear a voice in every wind,
And snatch a fearful joy.

Gay hope is theirs, by fancy fed,
Less pleasing when possest;
The tear forgot as soon as shed,
The sunshine of the breast;
Their buxom health of rosy hue,
Wild wit, invention ever new,
And lively cheer of vigour born;
The thoughtless day, the easy night,
The spirits pure, the slumbers light
That fly the approach of morn.

Alas! regardless of their doom,
The little victims play!
No sense have they of ills to come,
Nor care beyond to-day:
Yet see how all around 'em wait
The ministers of human fate,
And black Misfortune's baleful train!
Ah! show them where in ambush stand,
To seize their prey, the murderous band!
Ah! tell them they are men.

These shall the fury passions tear,
The vultures of the mind;
Disdainful anger, pallid fear,
And shame that skulks behind;
Or pining love shall waste their youth,
Or jealousy, with rankling tooth,
That inly gnaws the secret heart;
And envy wan, and faded care,
Grim-visaged, comfortless despair,
And sorrow's piercing dart.

Ambition this shall tempt to rise,
Then whirl the wretch from high,
To bitter scorn a sacrifice.
And grinning infamy,
The stings of falsehood those shall try,
And hard unkindness' altered eye,

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* King Henry VI. founder of the College.

† And bees their honey redolent of spring
Dryden's Fable on the Pythag. System.

That mocks the tear it forced to flow;
And keen remorse, with blood defiled,
And moody madness* laughing wild
Amid severest wo.

Lo! in the vale of years beneath
A grisly troop are seen,
The painful family of death,
More hideous than their queen:
This racks the joints, this fires the veins,
That every lab'ring sinew strains,
Those in the deeper vitals rage;
Lo! poverty to fill the band,
That numbs the soul with icy hand,
And slow-consuming age.

To each his sufferings; all are men
Condemned alike to groan,
The tender for another's pain,
Th' unfeeling for his own.
Yet ah! why should they know their fate
Since sorrow never comes too late,
And happiness too swiftly flies?
Thought would destroy their paradise,
No more; where ignorance is bliss
'Tis folly to be wise.

ODE IV.

TO ADVERSITY.

DAUGHTER of Jove, relentless power,
Thou tamer of the human breast,
Whose iron scourge and torturing hour
The bad affright, afflict the best!
Bound in thy adamantine chain,
The proud are taught to taste of pain,
And purple tyrants vainly groan
With pangs unfelt before, unpitied and alone.

When first thy sire to send on earth
Virtue, his darling child, designed,
To thee he gave the heavenly birth,
And bade to form her infant mind;
Stern rugged nurse! thy rigid lore
With patience many a year she bore:
What sorrow was thou bad'st her know,
And from her own she learned to melt at others' wo.

Sacred at thy frown terrific fly
Self-pleasing folly's idle brood,
Wild laughter, noise and thoughtless joy,
And leave us leisure to be good.
Light they disperse; and with them go
The summer friend, the flattering foe:
By vain prosperity received,
To her they vow their truth, and are again believed.

Wisdom, in sable garb arrayed,
Immersed in rapt'rous thought profound,
And melancholy, silent maid,
With leaden eye, that loves the ground,
Still on thy solemn steps attend;
Warm charity, the general friend,
With justice, to herself severe,
And pity, dropping soft the sadly-pleasing tear.

Oh! gently on thy suppliant's head,
Dread goddess! lay thy chastening hand,
Not in thy Gorgon terrors clad,
Nor circled with the vengeful band;
(As by the impious thou art seen,)
With thundering voice and threatening mien,
With screaming horror's funeral cry,
Despair, and fell disease, and ghastly poverty.

Thy form benign, O Goddess! wear,
Thy milder influence impart,
Thy philosophic train be there,
To soften, not to wound my heart:
The generous spark extinct revive;
Teach me to love and to forgive;
Exact my own defects to scan,
What others are to feel, and know myself a man.

ODE V.

THE PROGRESS OF POESY.—PINDARIC.

Advertisement.

When the author first published this and the following Ode, he was advised, even by his friends, to subjoin some few explanatory notes, but had too much respect for the understanding of his readers to take that liberty

I. 1.

AWAKE, Æolian lyre! awake,*
And give to rapture all thy trembling strings;
From Helicon's harmonious springs
A thousand rills their mazy progress take;
The laughing flowers, that round them blow,
Drink life and fragrance as they flow.
Now the rich stream of music winds along
Deep, majestic, smooth, and strong,
Through verdant vales and Ceres' golden reign;
Now rolling down the steep amain,
Headlong, impetous, see it pour;
The rocks and nodding groves rebellow to the roar.

* And Madness laughing in his ireful mood.
Dryden's Fable of Palamon and Arcite.

* Awake, my glory! awake, lute and harp.
David's Psalms.

Pindar styles his own poetry, with its musical accompaniments, Æolian song, Æolian strings, the breath of the Æolian flute. The subject and simile, as usual with Pindar, are here united. The various sources of poetry, which gives life and lustre to all it touches, are here described, as well in its quiet majestic progress, enriching every subject (otherwise dry and barren) with all the pomp of diction, and luxuriant harmony of numbers, as in its more rapid and irresistible course when swollen and hurried away by the conflict of tumultuous passions.

I. 2.

Oh sovereign* of the willing soul,
Parent of sweet and solemn-breathing airs,
Enchanting shell! the sullen cares
And frantic passions hear thy soft control.
On Thracia's hills the lord of war
Has curbed the fury of his car,
And dropped his thirsty lance at thy command:
Perching on the sceptred hand†
Of Jove, thy magic lulls the feathered king
With ruffled plumes and flagging wing;
Quenched in dark clouds of slumber lie
The terror of his beak and lightning of his eye.

I. 3.

Thee‡ the voice, the dance obey,
Tempered to thy warbled lay:
O'er Idalia's velvet green
The rosy-crowned loves are seen,
On Cytherea's day,
With antic sports and blue-eyed pleasures
Frisking light in frolic measures:
Now pursuing, now retreating,
Now in circling troops they meet;
To brisk notes in cadence beating
Glance their many-twinkling feet.
Slow-melting strains their queen's approach declare;
Where'er she turns the graces homage pay:
With arms sublime, that float upon the air,
In gliding state she wins her easy way;
O er her warm cheek and rising bosom move
The bloom of young desire and purple light of love.

II. 1.

Man's feeble race what ills await!§
Labour and penury, the rack of pain,
Disease, and sorrow's weeping train,
And death, sad refuge from the storms of fate!
The fond complaint, my song! disprove,
And justify the laws of Jove.
Say, has he given in vain the heavenly muse?
Night and all her sickly dews,
Her spectres wan, and birds of boding cry,
He gives to range the dreary sky,
Till down the eastern cliffs afar‖
Hyperion's march they spy and glittering shafts of war.

* Power of harmony to calm the turbulent passions of the soul. The thoughts are borrowed from the first Pythian of Pindar.

† This is a weak imitation of some beautiful lines in the same ode.

‡ Power of harmony to produce all the graces of motion in the body.

§ To compensate the real or imaginary ills of life, the muse was given to mankind by the same Providence that sends the day by its cheerful presence to dispel the gloom and terrors of the night.

‖ Or seen the morning's well-appointed star,
Come marching up the eastern hills afar.—*Cowley.*

II. 2.

In climes* beyond the solar road,†
Where shaggy forms o'er ice-built mountains roam,
The muse has broke the twilight-gloom
To cheer the shivering native's dull abode:
And oft beneath the odorous shade
Of Chili's boundless forests laid,
She deigns to hear the savage youth repeat,
In loose numbers, wildly sweet,
Their feather-cinctured chiefs and dusky loves.
Her track, where'er the goddess roves,
Glory pursue, and generous shame,
The unconquerable mind and freedom's holy flame.

II. 3.

Woods that wave o'er Delphi's steep,‡
Isles that crown the Ægean deep,
Fields that cool Ilissus laves,
Or where Mæander's amber waves
In lingering labyrinths creep,
How do your tuneful echoes languish,
Mute but to the voice of anguish?
Where each old poetic mountain
Inspiration breathed around,
Every shade and hallowed fountain
Murmured deep a solemn sound,
Till the sad nine, in Greece's evil hour,
Left their Parnassus for the Latian plains:
Alike they scorn the pomp of tyrant power
And coward vice, that revels in her chains,
When Latium had her lofty spirit lost,
They sought, oh, Albion! next thy sea-encircled coast.

III. 1.

Far from the sun and summer gale,
In thy green lap was nature's darling§ laid,
What time, where lucid Avon strayed
To him the mighty mother did unveil
Her awful face; the dauntless child
Stretched forth his little arms, and smiled.
This pencil take (she said) whose colours clear
Richly paint the vernal year;
Thine too these golden keys, immortal boy!
This can unlock the gates of joy;
Of horror that, and thrilling fears,
Or ope the sacred source of sympathetic tears.

* Extensive influence of poetic genius over the remotest and most uncivilized nations; its connexion with liberty, and the virtues that naturally attend on it. (See the Erse, Norwegian, and Welsh Fragments, the Lapland and American Songs, &c.,

† Extra anni solisque vias.—*Virgil.*

Tutta lontana dal camin del sole.—*Petrarch, Canz.* 2.

‡ Progress of poetry from Greece to Italy, and from Italy to England. Chaucer was not unacquainted with the writings of Dante or of Petrarch. The Earl of Surrey and Sir Thomas Wyatt had travelled in Italy, and formed their taste there: Spencer imitated the Italian writers, Milton improved on them: but this school expired soon after the restoration, and a new one arose on the French model, which has subsisted ever since

§ Shakspeare.

III. 2.

Nor second he* that rode sublime
Upon the seraph-wings of ecstacy,
The secrets of the abyss to spy,
He passed the flaming bounds of place and time:†
The living throne, the sapphire-blaze,‡
Where angels tremble while they gaze,
He saw, but, blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.
Behold where Dryden's less presumptuous car
Wide o'er the fields of glory bear
Two coursers of ethereal race,§
With necks in thunder clothed‖ and long resounding pace.

III. 3.

Hark! his hands the lyre explore!
Bright-eyed fancy, hovering o'er,
Scatters from her pictured urn
Thoughts that breathe and words that burn;¶
But ah! 'tis heard no more**—
Oh, lyre divine! what daring spirit
Wakes thee now? though he inherit
Nor the pride nor ample pinion
That the Theban eagle bear,††
Sailing with supreme dominion
Through the azure deep of air,
Yet oft before his infant eyes would run
Such forms as glitter in the muse's ray
With orient hues, unborrowed of the sun;
Yet shall he mount, and keep his distant way
Beyond the limits of a vulgar fate,
Beneath the good how far—but far above the great.

* Milton.

† ——flammantia mœnia mundi.—*Lucretius.*

‡ For the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels. And above the firmament, that was over their heads, was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone.—This was the appearance of the glory of the Lord.—*Ezekiel*, i. 20, 26, 28.

§ Meant to express the stately march and sounding energy of Dryden's rhymes.

‖ Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?—*Job.*

¶ Words that weep and tears that speak.—*Cowley.*

** We have had in our language no other odes of the sublime kind than that of Dryden on St. Cecilia's day; for Cowley, who had his merit, yet wanted judgment, style, and harmony, for such a task. That of Pope is not worthy of so great a man. Mr. Mason, indeed, of late days, has touched the true chords, and, with a masterly hand, in some of his chorusses—above all, in the last of Caractacus;

Hark! heard ye not yon footstep dread? &c.

†† Pindar compares himself to that bird, and his enemies to ravens that croak and clamour in vain below, while it pursues its flight regardless of their noise.

ODE VI.

THE BARD.—PINDARIC.

Advertisement.

The following Ode is founded on a tradition current in Wales, that Edward I. when he completed the conquest of that country, ordered all the bards that fell into his hands to be put to death.

I. 1.

"Ruin seize thee, ruthless king!
Confusion on thy banners wait;
Though fanned by conquest's crimson wing,
They mock the air with idle state.*
Helm nor hauberk's† twisted mail,
Nor e'en thy virtues, tyrant! shall avail
To save thy secret soul from nightly fears;
From Cambria's curse, from Cambria's tears!"
Such were the sounds that o'er the crested pride‡
Of the first Edward scattered wild dismay,
As down the steep of Snowdon's shaggy side§
He wound with toilsome march his long array.
Stout Glo'ster‖ stood aghast in speechless trance:
To arms, cried Mortimer¶, and couched his quivering lance.

I. 2.

On a rock, whose haughty brow
Frowns o'er old Conway's foaming flood,
Robed in the sable garb of wo,
With haggard eyes the poet stood;
(Loose his beard, and hoary hair**
Streamed like a meteor to the troubled air,††)
And with a master's hand and prophet's fire
Struck the deep sorrows of his lyre.

* Mocking the air with colours idly spread.
Shaksp. King John.

† The hauberk was a texture of steel ringlets or rings interwoven, forming a coat of mail that sat close to the body, and adapted itself to every motion.

‡ The crested adder's pride.—*Dryden's Indian Queen.*

§ Snowdon was a name given by the Saxons to that mountainous tract which the Welsh themselves call Craigian-eryri: it included all the highlands of Caernarvonshire and Merionethshire, as far east as the river Conway. R. Hygden, speaking of the castle of Conway, built by King Edward I. says, *Ardortum amnis Conway ad clivum montis Erery;* and Matthew of Westminster, (*ad an.* 1283) *Apud Aberconway ad pedes montis Snowdoniæ fecit erigi castrum forte.*

‖ Gilbert de Clare, surnamed the Red, Earl of Gloucester and Hertford, son-in-law to King Edward.

¶ Edmund de Mortimer, Lord of Wigmore. They both were Lord Marchers, whose lands lay on the borders of Wales, and probably accompanied the king in this expedition.

** The image was taken from a well known picture of Raphael, representing the Supreme Being in the vision of Ezekiel. There are two of these paintings, both believed original, one at Florence, the other at Paris.

†† Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind.
Milton's Paradise Lost

"Hark how each giant oak and desert cave
Sighs to the torrent's awful voice beneath!
O'er thee, oh king! their hundred arms they wave,
Revenge on thee in hoarser murmurs breathe;
Vocal no more, since Cambria's fatal day,
To high-born Hoel's harp or soft Llewellyn's lay.

I. 3.

"Cold is Cadwallo's tongue,
That hushed the stormy main;
Brave Urien sleeps upon his craggy bed:
Mountains! ye mourn in vain
Modred, whose magic song
Made huge Plinlimmon bow his cloud-topped head.
On dreary Arvon's* shore they lie,
Smeared with gore and ghastly pale;
Far, far aloof the affrighted ravens sail,
The famished eagle† screams and passes by.
Dear lost companions of my tuneful art,
Dear‡ as the light that visits these sad eyes,
Dear as the ruddy drops that warm my heart,
Ye died amidst your dying country's cries——
No more I weep. They do not sleep:
On yonder cliffs, a grisly band,
I see them sit; they linger yet,
Avengers of their native land;
With me in dreadful harmony they join,
And weave§ with bloody hands the tissue of thy line."

II. 1.

'Weave the warp and weave the woof,
The winding-sheet of Edward's race:
Give ample room and verge enough
The characters of hell to trace.
Mark the year and mark the night
When Severn shall re-echo with affright
The shrieks of death through Berkley's roofs that ring,
Shrieks of an agonizing king!‖
She-wolf of France,¶ with unrelenting fangs
That tearest the bowels of thy mangled mate,
From thee** be born who o'er thy country hangs
The scourge of heaven. What terrors round him wait!
Amazement in his van, with flight combined,
And sorrow's faded form, and solitude behind.

II. 2.

'Mighty victor, mighty lord,
Low on his funeral couch he lies*
No pitying heart, no eye, afford
A tear to grace his obsequies!
Is the sable warriort fled?
Thy son is gone; he rests among the dead.
The swarm that in thy noontide beam were born,
Gone to salute the rising morn:
Fair laughs the morn,‡ and soft the zephyr blows,
While proudly riding o'er the azure realm
In gallant trim the gilded vessel goes,
Youth on the prow and pleasure at the helm,
Regardless of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
That hushed in grim repose expects his evening prey.

II. 3.

'Fill high the sparkling bowl,§
The rich repast prepare;
Reft of a crown, he yet may share the feast.
Close by the regal chair
Fell thirst and famine scowl
A baleful smile upon the baffled guest.
Heard ye the din of battle bray,‖
Lance to lance and horse to horse?
Long years of havoc urge their destined course,
And through the kindred squadrons mow their way.
Ye towers of Julius!¶ London's lasting shame,
With many a foul and midnight murder fed,
Revere his consort's** faith, his father's†† fame,
And spare the meek usurper's‡‡ holy head.
Above, below, the rose of snow,§§
Twined with her blushing foe, we spread;
The bristled Boar‖‖ in infant gore
Wallows beneath the thorny shade.

* The shores of Caernarvonshire, opposite to the isle of Anglesey.

† Camden and others observe, that eagles used annually to build their aerie among the rocks of Snowdon, which from thence (as some think) were named by the Welsh, Craigian-eryri, or the crags of the eagles. At this day (I am told) the highest point of Snowdon is called The Eagle's Nest. That bird is certainly no stranger to this island, as the Scots, and the people of Cumberland, Westmoreland, &c. can testify: it even has built its nest in the Peak of Derbyshire. [See *Willughby's Ornithol.* published by Ray.]

‡ As dear to me as are the ruddy drops
That visit my sad heart.—*Shaksp. Julius Cæsar.*

§ See the Norwegian Ode that follows.

‖ Edward II. cruelly butchered in Berkeley Castle.

¶ Isabel of France, Edward II.'s adulterous queen.

** Triumphs of Edward III. in France.

* Death of that king, abandoned by his children, and even robbed in his last moments by his courtiers and mistress.

† Edward the Black Prince, dead some time before his father.

‡ Magnificence of Richard II.'s reign. See Froissard, and other contemporary writers.

§ Richard II. (as we are told by Archbishop Scroop, and the confederate lords, in their manifesto, by Thomas of Walsingham, and all the older writers) was starved to death. The story of his assassination by Sir Piers of Exon is of much later date.

‖ Ruinous civil wars of York and Lancaster.

¶ Henry VI., George Duke of Clarence, Edward V., Richard Duke of York, &c. believed to be murdered secretly in the Tower of London. The oldest part of that structure is vulgarly attributed to Julius Cæsar.

** Margaret of Anjou, a woman of heroic spirit, who struggled hard to save her husband and her crown.

†† Henry V.

‡‡ Henry VI. very near being canonized. The line of Lancaster had no right of inheritance to the crown.

§§ The white and red Roses, devices of York and Lancaster.

‖‖ The silver Boar was the badge of Richard III. whence he was usually known in his own time by the name of The Boar

Now, brothers! bending o'er the accursed loom,
Stamp we our vengeance deep, and ratify his doom.

III. 1.

'Edward, lo! to sudden fate
(Weave we the woof; the thread is spun)
Half of thy heart* we consecrate;
(The web is wove; the work is done.')
"Stay, oh stay! nor thus forlorn
Leave me unblessed, unpitied, here to mourn.
In yon bright track, that fires the western skies,
They melt, they vanish from my eyes.
But oh! what solemn scenes on Snowdon's height,
Descending slow, their glittering skirts unroll!
Visions of glory! spare my aching sight,
Ye unborn ages crowd not on my soul!
No more our long-lost Arthur† we bewail:
All hail, ye genuine kings;‡ Britannia's issue, hail!

III. 2.

"Girt with many a baron bold
Sublime their starry fronts they rear,
And gorgeous dames and statesmen old
In bearded majesty appear;
In the midst a form divine,
Her eye proclaims her of the Briton-line,
Her lion-port, her awe-commanding face,§
Attempered sweet to virgin grace.
What strings symphonious tremble in the air!
What strains of vocal transport round her play!
Hear from the grave, great Taliessin!‖ hear!
They breathe a soul to animate thy clay.
Bright rapture calls, and, soaring as she sings,
Waves in the eye of heaven her many-coloured wings.

III. 3.

"The verse adorn again.
Fierce war, and faithful love,¶
And truth severe, by fairy fiction drest.
In buskined measures move*
Pale grief, and pleasing pain,
With horror, tyrant of the throbbing breast.
A voice† as of the cherub-choir
Gales from blooming Eden bear,
And distant warbling‡ lessen on my ear,
That lost in long futurity expire.
Fond impious man! think'st thou yon sanguine cloud,
Raised by thy breath, has quenched the orb of day?
To-morrow he repairs the golden flood,
And warms the nations with redoubled ray.
Enough for me: with joy I see
The different doom our fates assign.
Be thine despair and sceptred care;
To triumph and to die are mine."
He spoke, and, headlong from the mountain's height,
Deep in the roaring tide, he plunged to endless night.

* Eleanor of Castile died a few years after the conquest of Wales. The heroic proofs she gave of her affection for her lord is well known. The monuments of his regret and sorrow for the loss of her are still to be seen at Northampton, Gaddington Waltham, and other places.

† It was the common belief of the Welsh nation, that king Arthur was still alive in Fairyland, and should return again to reign over Britain.

‡ Both Merlin and Taliessin had prophesied that the Welsh should regain their sovereignty over this island, which seemed to be accomplished in the house of Tudor.

§ Speed, relating an audience given by queen Elizabeth to Paul Dzialinski, ambassador of Poland, says, "And thus she, lion-like rising, daunted the malapert orator no less with her stately port and majestical deporture, than with the tartness of her princelie cheekes."

‖ Taliessin, the chief of the bards, flourished in the 6th century. His works are still preserved, and his memory held in high veneration among his countrymen.

¶ Fierce wars and faithful loves shall moralize my song.
Spenser's Poem to the Fairy Queen.

* Shakspeare. † Milton.
‡ The succession of the poets after Milton's time.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The Author once had thoughts (in concert with a friend) of giving a history of English poetry. In the introduction to it he meant to have produced some specimens of the style that reigned in ancient times among the neighbouring nations, or those who had subdued the greater part of this island, and were our progenitors: the following three imitations made a part of them. He afterwards dropped his design; especially after he had heard that it was already in the hands of a person well qualified to do it justice both by his taste and his researches into antiquity.

ODE VII.

THE FATAL SISTERS.

From the Norse tongue.

To be found in the Orcades of Thermodus Torfæus, Hafniæ, 1679, folio; and also in Bartholinus. Vitt er orpit fyrir Valfalli, &c.

PREFACE.

In the eleventh century, Sigurd, Earl of the Orkney islands, went with a fleet of ships, and a considerable body of troops, into Ireland, to the assistance of Sigtryg with the silken Beard, who was then making war on his father-in-law, Brian, king of Dublin. The earl and all his forces were cut to pieces, and Sigtryg was in danger of a total defeat; but the enemy had a greater loss by the death of Brian, their king, who fell in the action. On Christmas-day (the day of the battle) a native of Caithness, in Scotland, saw, at a distance, a number of persons on horseback riding full speed towards a hill, and seeming to enter into

it. Curiosity led him to follow them, till, looking through an opening in the rock, he saw twelve gigantic figures, resembling women: they were all employed about a loom; and as they wove, they sung the following dreadful song, which, when they had finished, they tore the web into twelve pieces, and each taking her portion, galloped six to the north, and as many to the south.

Now the storm begins to lower,
(Haste, the loom of hell prepare,)
Iron-sleet of arrowy shower*
Hurtlest in the darkened air.

Glittering lances are the loom
Where the dusky warp we strain,
Weaving many a soldier's doom,
Orkney's wo and Randver's bane.

See the grisly texture grow,
('Tis of human entrails made,)
And the weights that play below
Each a gasping warrior's head.

Shafts for shuttles, dipt in gore,
Shoot the trembling cords along:
Sword, that once a monarch bore,
Keep the tissue close and strong,

Mista, black terrific maid!
Sangrida and Hilda see,
Join the wayward work to aid;
'Tis the woof of victory.

Ere the ruddy sun be set
Pikes must shiver, javelins sing,
Blade with clattering buckler meet,
Hauberk crash, and helmet ring.

(Weave the crimson web of war)
Let us go, and let us fly,
Where our friends the conflict share,
Where they triumph, where they die.

As the paths of fate we tread,
Wading through the ensanguined field,
Gondula and Geira spread
O'er the youthful king your shield.

We the reins to slaughter give,
Ours to kill and ours to spare:
Spite of danger he shall live:
(Weave the crimson web of war.)

They whom once the desert beach
Pent within its bleak domain,
Soon their ample sway shall stretch
O'er the plenty of the plain.

Low the dauntless earl is laid,
Gored with many a gaping wound
Fate demands a nobler head;
Soon a king shall bite the ground.

Long his loss shall Erin* weep,
Ne'er again his likeness see;
Long her strains in sorrow steep,
Strains of immortality!

Horror covers all the heath,
Clouds of carnage blot the sun:
Sisters! weave the web of death:
Sisters! cease, the work is done.

Hail the task and hail the hands!
Songs of joy and triumph sing;
Joy to the victorious bands,
Triumph to the younger king.

Mortal! thou that hearest the tale
Learn the tenor of our song;
Scotland through each winding vale
Far and wide the notes prolong.

Sisters! hence with spurs of speed;
Each her thundering falchion wield;
Each bestride her sable steed:
Hurry, hurry to the field.

Note.—The Valkyriur were female divinities, servants of Odin (or Wodin) in the Gothic mythology. Their name signifies *choosers of the slain.* They were mounted on swift horses, with drawn swords in their hands, and in the throng of battle selected such as were destined to slaughter, and conducted them to Valkalla, (the hall of Odin, or paradise of the brave,) where they attended the banquet, and served the departed heroes with horns of mead and ale.

* How quick they wheeled, and flying, behind them shot
Sharp sleet of arrowy shower.—*Milt. Par. Reg.*
The noise of battle hurtled in the air.—*Shak. Jul. Cæs.*

ODE VIII.

THE DESCENT OF ODIN.

From the Norse tongue.

To be found in Bartholinus, decausis contemnendæ mortis Hasniæ, 1689, *Quarto.*

Upreis Odinn Allda gautr, &c.

Up rose the king of men with speed,
And saddled straight his coal-black steed;
Down the yawning steep he rode
That leads to Hela's† drear abode.
Him the dog of darkness spied;
His shaggy throat he opened wide,
While from his jaws, with carnage filled,
Foam and human gore distilled:
Hoarse he brays with hideous din,
Eyes that glow and fangs that grin,

* Ireland.

† Nifilheimr, the hell of the Gothic nations, consisted of nine worlds, to which were devoted all such as died of sickness, old age, or by any other means than in battle; over it presided Hela the goddess of Death.

And long pursues with fruitless yell
The father of the powerful spell.
Onward still his way he takes,
(The groaning earth beneath him shakes,)
Till full before his fearless eyes
The portals nine of hell arise.
Right against the eastern gate,
By the moss-grown pile he sate,
Where long of yore to sleep was laid
The dust of the prophetic maid.
Facing to the northern clime,
Thrice he traced the Runic rhyme,
Thrice pronounced, in accents dread,
The thrilling verse that wakes the dead,
Till from out the hollow ground
Slowly breathed a sullen sound.
Proph. What call unknown, what charms presume
To break the quiet of the tomb?
Who thus afflicts my troubled sprite,
And drags me from the realms of night?
Long on these mouldering bones have beat
The winter's snows, the summer's heat,
The drenching dews and driving rain!
Let me, let me sleep again.
Who is he, with voice unblest,
That calls me from the bed of rest?
Odin. A traveller, to thee unknown,
Is he that calls, a warrior's son.
Thou the deeds of light shalt know;
Tell me what is done below,
For whom yon glittering board is spread,
Drest for whom yon golden bed?
Proph. Mantling in the goblet see
The pure beverage of the bee,
O'er it hangs the shield of gold;
'Tis the drink of Balder bold:
Balder's head to death is given;
Pain can reach the sons of Heaven!
Unwilling I my lips unclose:
Leave me, leave me to repose.
Odin. Once again my call obey:
Prophetess arise, and say,
What dangers Odin's child await,
Who the author of his fate?
Proph. In Hoder's hand the hero's doom;
His brother sends him to the tomb
Now my weary lips I close;
Leave me, leave me to repose.
Odin. Prophetess! my spell obey;
Once again arise, and say,
Who the avenger of his guilt
By whom shall Hoder's blood be spilt?
Proph. In the caverns of the west,
By Odin's fierce embrace comprest,
A wondrous boy shall Kinda bear,
Who ne'er shall comb his raven hair,
Nor wash his visage in the stream,
Nor see the sun's departing beam,
Till he on Hoder's corse shall smile
Flaming on the funeral pile.
Now my weary lips I close;
Leave me, leave me to repose.
Odin. Yet a while my call obey:
Prophetess! awake, and say,
What virgins these, in speechless wo,
That bend to earth their solemn brow,
That their flaxen tresses tear,
And snowy veils that float in air?
Tell me whence their sorrows rose,
Then I leave thee to repose.
Proph. Ha! no traveller art thou;
King of men, I know thee now;
Mightiest of a mighty line——
Odin. No boding maid of skill divine
Art thou, no prophetess of good,
But mother of the giant-brood!
Proph. Hie thee hence, and boast at home,
That never shall inquirer come
To break my iron-sleep again
Till Lok* has burst his tenfold chain;
Never till substantial night
Has re-assumed her ancient right,
Till wrapped in flames, in ruin hurled,
Sinks the fabric of the world.

ODE IX.

THE TRIUMPH OF OWEN:

A Fragment.

From Mr. Evan's specimen of the Welsh poetry. London, 1764, *Quarto.*

ADVERTISEMENT.

OWEN succeeded his father Griffin in the principality of North Wales, A. D. 1120: this battle was near forty years afterwards.

OWEN's praise demands my song,
Owen swift and Owen strong,
Fairest flower of Roderick's stem,
Gwyneth's† shield and Britain's gem.
He nor heaps his brooded stores,
Nor on all profusely pours,
Lord of every regal art,
Liberal hand and open heart.

* Lok is the evil being, who continues in chains till the *twilight of the gods* approaches, when he shall break his bonds; the human race, the stars, the sun, shall disappear, the earth sink in the seas, and fire consume the skies; even Odin himself, and his kindred deities, shall perish. For a farther explanation of this mythology, see *Introduction a l' Histoire de Danemare, par Mons. Mallat.* 1755, 4to; or rather a translation of it published in 1770, and entitled *Northern Antiquities*, in which some mistakes in the original are judiciously corrected.

† North Wales.

Big with hosts of mighty name,
Squadrons three against him came;
This the force of Eirin hiding;
Side by side as proudly riding;
On her shadow long and gay
Lochlin* ploughs the watery way;
There the Norman sails afar,
Catch the winds and join the war;
Black and huge along they sweep,
Burthens of the angry deep.
Dauntless on his native sands
The dragon son† of Mona stands;
In glitterring arms and glory drest,
High he rears his ruby crest:
There the thundering strokes begin,
There the press and there the din,
Talymalfra's rocky shore
Echoing in the battle's roar.
Checked by the torrent-tide of blood,
Backward Meinai rolls his flood,
While, heaped his master's feet around,
Prostrate warriors gnaw the ground.
Where his glowing eyeballs turn,
Thousand banners round him burn;
Where he points his purple spear.
Hasty, hasty rout is there;
Marking, with indignant eye,
Fear to stop and shame to fly:
There confusion, terror's child,
Conflict fierce and ruin wild,
Agony, that pants for breath,
Despair and honourable death.
* * * * * *

ODE X.

THE DEATH OF HOEL.

From the Welsh of Aneurim, styled The Monarch of the Bards.

He flourished about the time of Taliessin, A. D. 570. This Ode is extracted from the Gododin.

[See Mr. Evan's specimens, pp. 71, 73.]

Had I but the torrent's might,
With headlong rage, and wild affright,
Upon Deïra's squadrons hurled,
To rush and sweep them from the world!
Too, too secure in youthful pride,
By them my friend, my Hoel, died,
Great Cian's son; of Madoc old,
He asked no heaps of hoarded gold;
Alone in nature's wealth arrayed,
He asked and had the lovely maid.
To Cattraeth's vale, in glittering row,
Twice two hundred warriors go;
Every warrior's manly neck
Chains of regal honour deck,
Wreathed in many a golden link:
From the golden cup they drink
Nectar that the bees produce,
Or the grape's ecstatic juice.
Flushed with mirth and hope they burn,
But none from Cattraeth's vale return,
Save Aëron brave, and Conan strong,
(Bursting through the bloody throng,)
And I, the meanest of them all,
That live to weep and sing their fall.

* Denmark.

† The red Dragon is the device of Cadwallader, which all his descendants bore on their banners.

ODE XI.

[FOR MUSIC.]

Performed in the Senate-house, Cambridge, July 1, 1769, at the installation of his Grace Augustus-Henry-Fitzroy, Duke of Grafton, Chancellor of the University.

I.

"Hence, avaunt! ('tis holy ground,)
Comus and his midnight crew,
And ignorance with looks profound,
And dreaming sloth of pallid hue,
Mad sedition's cry profane,
Servitude that hugs her chain,
Nor in these consecrated bowers,
Let painted flattery hide her serpent-train in flowers,
Nor envy base, nor creeping gain,
Dare the muse's walk to stain,
While bright-eyed science watches round:
Hence away! 'tis holy ground."

II.

From yonder realms of empyrean day
Bursts on my ear th' indignant lay;
There sit the sainted sage, the bard divine,
The few whom genius gave to shine
Through every unborn age and undiscovered clime.
Rapt in celestial transport they,
Yet hither oft a glance from high
They send of tender sympathy
To bless the place where on their opening soul
First the genuine ardour stole.
'Twas Milton struck the deep-toned shell
And, as the choral warblings round him swell,
Meek Newton's self bends from his state sublime,
And nods his hoary head, and listens to the rhyme.

III.

"Ye brown o'er-arching groves!
That contemplation loves,
Where widowy Camus lingers with delight,
Oft at the blush of dawn
I trod your level lawn,
Oft wooed the gleam of Cynthia silver-bright

In cloisters dim, far from the haunts of folly,
With freedom by my side and soft-eyed melancholy."

IV.

But hark! the portals sound, in pacing forth,
With solemn steps and slow,
High potentates, and dames of royal birth,
And mitred fathers, in long order go:
Great Edward, with the lilies on his brow* .
From haughty Gallia torn,
And sad Chatillon,† on her bridal morn,
That wept her bleeding love, and princely Clare,‡
And Anjou's heroine,§ and the paler rose,‖
The rival of her crown, and of her woes,
And either Henry¶ there,
The murdered saint, and the majestic lord,
That broke the bonds of Rome.
(Their tears, their little triumphs o'er,
Their human passions now no more,
Save charity, that glows beyond the tomb)
All that on Granta's fruitful plain
Rich streams of regal bounty poured,
And bade those awful fanes and turrets rise
To hail their Fitzroy's festal morning come;
And thus they speak in soft accord
The liquid language of the skies:

V.

"What is grandeur, what is power?
Heavier toil, superior pain,
What the bright reward we gain?
The grateful memory of the good.
Sweet is the breath of vernal shower,
The bee's collected treasures sweet,
Sweet music's melting fall, but sweeter yet
The still small voice of gratitude."

VI.

Foremost, and leaning from her golden cloud,
The venerable Margaret* see!
"Welcome, my noble son!" she cries aloud,
"To this thy kindred train and me:
Pleased in thy lineaments we trace
A Tudor's† fire, a Beaufort's grace:
Thy liberal heart, thy judging eye,
The flower unheeded shall descry,
And bid it round heaven's altars shed
The fragrance of its blushing head;
Shall raise from earth the latent gem
To glitter on the diadem.

VII.

"Lo! Granta waits to lead her blooming band;
Not obvious, not obtrusive, she
No vulgar praise, no venal incense flings,
Nor dares with courtly tongue refined
Profane thy inborn royalty of mind:
She reveres herself and thee.
With modest pride to grace thy youthful brow
The laureat wreath‡ that Cecil wore she brings,
And to thy just, thy gentle hand
Submits the fasces of her sway;
While spirits blest above, and men below,
Join with glad voice the loud symphonious lay.

VIII.

"Through the wild waves, as they roar,
With watchful eye, and dauntless mien,
Thy steady course of honour keep,
Nor fear the rock nor seek the shore:
The star of Brunswick smiles serene,
And gilds the horrors of the deep."

* Edward III. who added the *Fleur de lys* of France to the arms of England. He founded Trinity-College.

† Mary de Valentia, Countess of Pembroke, daughter of Guy de Chatillon, Comte de St. Paul in France, of whom tradition says that her husband, Audemarde de Valentia, earl of Pembroke, was slain at a tournament on the day of his nuptials. She was the foundress of Pembroke-College, or Hall, under the name of Aula Mariæ de Valentia.

‡ Elizabeth de Burg, countess of Clare, was wife of John de Burg, son and heir of the earl of Ulster, and daughter of Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, by Joan of Acres, daughter of Edward I. hence the poet gives her the epithet of princely. She founded Clare-hill.

§ Margaret of Anjou, wife of Henry VI. foundress of Queen's College. The poet has celebrated her conjugal fidelity in a former ode.

‖ Elizabeth Widville, wife of Edward IV. (hence called the paler Rose, as being of the house of York.) She added to the foundation of Margaret of Anjou.

¶ Henry VI. and VIII. the former the founder of King's, the latter the greatest benefactor to Trinity-College.

* Countess of Richmond and Derby, the mother of Henry VII. foundress of St. John's and Christ's Colleges.

† The Countess was a Beaufort, and married to a Tudor, hence the application of this line to the duke of Grafton who claims descent from both these families.

‡ Lord treasurer Burleigh was chancellor of the University in the reign of queen Elizabeth.

Miscellanies.

A LONG STORY.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Mr. Gray's Elegy, previous to its publication, was handed about in MS. and had, amongst other admirers, the lady Cobham, who resided in the mansion-house at Stoke-Pogeis. The performance inducing her to wish for the author's acquaintance, lady Schaub and Miss Speed, then at her house, undertook to introduce her to it. These two ladies waited upon the author at his aunt's solitary habitation, where he at that time resided, and not finding him at home, they left a card behind them. Mr. Gray, surprised at such a compliment, returned the visit; and as the beginning of this intercourse bore some appearance of romance, he gave the humorous and lively account of it which the Long Story contains.

In Britain's isle, no matter where,
An ancient pile of building stands;*
The Huntingdons and Hattons there
Employed the power of fairy hands.

To raise the ceilings fretted height,
Each pannel in achievements clothing,
Rich windows that exclude the light,
And passages that lead to nothing.

Full oft within the spacious walls,
When he had fifty winters o'er him,
My grave lord-keeper† led the brawls:
The seal and maces danced before him.

His bushy beard and shoe-strings green,
His high-crowned hat and satin doublet,
Moved the stout heart of England's queen,
Though pope and Spaniard could not trouble it.

What, in the very first beginning,
Shame of the versifying tribe!
Your history whither are you spinning?
Can you do nothing but describe?

A house there is (and that's enough)
From whence one fatal morning issues
A brace of warriors,‡ not in buff,
But rustling in their silks and tissues.

The first came *cap-à-pèe* from France,
Her conquering destiny fulfilling,
Whom meaner beauties eye askance,
And vainly ape her art of killing.

The other Amazon kind Heaven
Had armed with, spirit, wit, and satire;
But Cobham had the polish given,
And tipped her arrows with good-nature

To celebrate her eyes, her air—
Coarse panegyrics would but tease her;
Melissa is her *nom de guerre;*
Alas! who would not wish to please her!

With bonnet blue and capuchine,
And aprons long, they hid their armour,
And veiled their weapons bright and keen
In pity to the country farmer.

Fame in the shape of Mr. P—t,*
(By this time all the parish know it)
Had told that thereabouts there lurked
A wicked imp they called a poet.

Who prowled the country far and near,
Bewitched the children of the peasants,
Dried up the cows and lamed the deer,
And sucked the eggs and killed the pheasants.

My lady heard their joint petition,
Swore by her coronet and ermine,
She'd issue out her high commission
To rid the manor of such vermin.

The heroines undertook the task;
Through lanes unknown, o'er stiles they ventured,
Rapped at the door, nor stayed to ask,
But bounce into the parlour entered.

The trembling family they daunt,
They flirt, they sing, they laugh, they tattle.
Rummage his mother, pinch his aunt,
And up stairs in a whirlwind rattle.

Each hole and cupboard they explore,
Each creek and cranny of his chamber,

* The mansion-house at Stoke-Pogeis, then in possession of viscountess Cobham. The style of building which we now call queen Elizabeth's, is here admirably described, both with regard to its beauties and defects; and the third and fourth stanzas delineate the fantastic manners of her time with equal truth and humour. The house formerly belonged to the earls of Huntingdon and the family of Hatton.

† Sir Christopher Hatton, promoted by Queen Elizabeth for his graceful person and fine dancing. Brawls were a sort of a figure-dance then in vogue, and probably deemed as elegant as our modern cotillions, or still more modern quadrilles.

‡ The reader is already apprised who these ladies were; the two descriptions are prettily contrasted; and nothing can be more happily turned than the compliment to lady Cobham in the eighth stanza.

* I have been told that this gentleman, a neighbour and acquaintance of Mr. Gray's in the country, was much displeased at the liberty here taken with his name, yet surely without any great reason.

Run hurry scurry round the floor,
And o'er the bed and tester clamber;

Into the drawers and china pry,
Papers and books, a huge imbroglio!
Under a tea-cup he might lie,
Or creased like dog's ears in a folio.

On the first marching of the troops,
The muses, hopeless of his pardon,
Conveyed him underneath their hoops
To a small closet in the garden.

So rumour says, (who will believe?)
But that they left the door a-jar,
Where safe, and laughing in his sleeve
He heard the distant din of war.

Short was his joy; he little knew
The power of magic was no fable;
Out of the window wisk they flew,
But left a spell upon the table.

The words too eager to unriddle,
The poet felt a strange disorder;
Transparent birdlime formed the middle,
And chains invisible the border.

So cunning was the apparatus,
The powerful pothooks did so move him,
That will he nill to the great house
He went as if the devil drove him.

Yet on his way (no sign of grace,
For folks in fear are apt to pray)
To Phœbus he preferred his case,
And begged his aid that dreadful day.

The godhead would have backed his quarrel:
But with a blush, on recollection,
Owned that his quiver and his laurel
'Gainst four such eyes were no protection.

The court was sat, the culprit there:
Forth from their gloomy mansions creeping,
The lady Janes and Jones repair,
And from the gallery stand peeping;

Such as in silence of the night
Come (sweep) along some winding entry,
(Styack* has often seen the sight)
Or at the chapel-door stand sentry;

In peaked hoods and mantle tarnished,
Sour visages enough to scare ye,
High dames of honour once that garnished
The drawing-room of fierce queen Mary!

The peeress comes: the audience stare,
And doff their hats with due submission;
She courtesies, as she takes her chair,
To all the people of condition.

The bard with many an artful fib
Had in imagination fenced him,
Disproved the arguments of Squib,*
And all that Groom† could urge against him.

But soon his rhetoric forsook him
When he the solemn hall had seen;
A sudden fit of ague shook him;
He stood as mute as poor Macleane.‡

Yet something he was heard to mutter,
"How in the park, beneath an old tree,
(Without design to hurt the butter,
Or any malice to the poultry,)

He once or twice had penned a sonnet,
Yet hoped that he might save his bacon:
Numbers would give their oaths upon it,
He ne'er was for a conjuror taken."

The ghostly prudes, with hagged§ face,
Already had condemned the sinner:
My lady rose, and with a grace——
She smiled, and bid him come to dinner.‖

"Jesu-Maria! Madam Bridget,
Why, what can the viscountess mean!"
Cried the square hoods, in woful fidget;
"The times are altered quite and clean!

"Decorum's turned to mere civility!
Her air and all her manners show it:
Commend me to her affability!
Speak to a commoner and poet!"
[*Here 500 stanzas are lost.*]

And so God save our noble king,
And guard us from long-winded lubbers,
That to eternity would sing,
And keep my lady from her rubbers.

ELEGY

WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD.

THE curfew tolls¶ the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

* The house-keeper.

* The steward. † Groom of the chamber.

‡ A famous highwayman, hanged the week before.

§ Hagged, *i. e.* the face of a witch or hag. The epithet *haggard* has been sometimes mistaken as conveying the same idea, but it means a very different thing, viz. wild and farouche, and is taken from an unreclaimed hawk called a haggard.

‖ Here the story finishes; the exclamation of the ghosts, which follows, is characteristic of the Spanish manners of the age when they are supposed to have lived, and the 500 stanzas said to be lost, may be imagined to contain the remainder of their long-winded expostulation.

¶ ——squila di lontano
Che pala'l giorno pianger, che si muore,
Dante Purgat. l. 8.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their sire's return,
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke.

Let not ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure:
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth, e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud! impute to these the fault,
If memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where thro' the long drawn aisle and fretted vault,
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or flattery sooth the dull cold ear of death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstacy the living lyre.

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;
Chill penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton, here may rest,
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade; nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind;

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride
With incense kindled at the muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,*
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenour of their way.

Yet e'en these bones, from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by the unlettered muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply,
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who to dumb forgetfulness a prey
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
E'en from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
E'en in our ashes† live their wonted fires.

For thee, who, mindful of the unhonoured dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate,
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
"Oft have we seen him, at the peep of dawn,
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away,
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

* This part of the elegy differs from the first copy. The following stanza was excluded with the other alterations:

Hark! how the sacred calm, that breathes around,
Bids every fierce tumultuous passion cease,
In still small accents whispering from the ground,
A grateful earnest of eternal peace.

† Ch'i veggio nel pensier, dolce mio fuoco,
Fredda una lingua, et due begli occhi chiufi
Rimaner droppo noi pien difaville.—*Petrarch, Son.* 169.

"There, at the foot of yonder nodding beach,
That wreaths its old fantastic root so high,
His listless length at noon-tide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that bubbles by.

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies, he would rove;
Now drooping, woful wan! like one forlorn,
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

"One morn I missed him on the accustomed hill,
Along the heath,"* and near his fav'rite tree;
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood, was he:

'The next, with dirges due, in sad array,
Slow through the churchway-path we saw him borne:
Approach, and read (for thou canst read) the lay
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."†

EPITAPH.

Here rests his head upon the lap of earth,
A youth to fortune and to fame unknown:
Fair science frowned not on his humble birth,
And melancholy marked him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heaven did a recompense as largely send;
He gave to misery all he had, a tear;
He gained from Heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.

No further seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose‡)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

EPITAPH.

ON MRS. MARY CLARKE.§

Lo! where this silent marble weeps,
A friend, a wife, a mother, sleeps;
A heart, within whose sacred cell,
The peaceful virtues loved to dwell:
Affection warm, and faith sincere,
And soft humanity were there.
In agony, in death, resigned,
She felt the wound she left behind.
Her infant image here below
Sits smiling on a father's wo,
Whom what awaits while yet he strays
Along the lonely vale of days?
A pang, to secret sorrow dear,
A sigh, an unavailing tear,
Till time shall every grief remove
With life, with memory, and with love.

TRANSLATION FROM STATIUS.

Third in the labours of the disc came on,
With sturdy step and slow, Hippomedon;
Artful and strong he poised the well-known weight
By Phlegyas warned, and fired by Mnestheus' fate,
That to avoid, and this to emulate.
His vigorous arm he tried before he flung,
Braced all his nerves and every sinew strung,
Then with a tempest's whirl and wary eye
Pursued his cast, and hurled the orb on high;
The orb on high, tenacious of its course,
True to the mighty arm that gave it force,
Far overleaps all bound, and joys to see
Its ancient lord secure of victory:
The theatre's green height and woody wall
Tremble ere it precipitates its fall;
The ponderous mass sinks in the cleaving ground,
While vales and woods and echoing hills rebound,
As when from Ætna's smoking summit broke,
The eyeless Cyclops heaved the craggy rock,
Where ocean frets beneath the dashing oar,
And parting surges round the vessel roar;
'Twas there he aimed the meditated harm,
And scarce Ulysses 'scaped his giant arm.
A tiger's pride the victor bore away,
With native spots and artful labour gay,
A shining border round the margin rolled,
And calmed the terrors of his claws in gold.

Cambridge, May 8th, 1736.

GRAY OF HIMSELF.

Too poor for a bribe, and too proud to importune,
He had not the method of making a fortune:
Could love and could hate, so was thought something odd;
No very great wit, he believed in a God:
A post or a pension he did not desire,
But left church and state to Charles Townsend and Squire.

---

*Mr. Gray forgot, when he displaced, by the preceding stanza, his beautiful description of the evening haunt, the reference to it which he had here left:

Him have we seen the greenwood side along,
While o'er the heath we hied, our labour done,
Oft as the woodlark piped her farewell song,
With wistful eyes pursue the setting sun.

†In the early editions the following lines were added, but the parenthesis was thought too long:

There scattered oft, the earliest of the year,
By hands unseen, are showers of violets found;
The redbreast loves to build and warble there,
And little footsteps lightly print the ground.

‡——Paventosa speme. *Petrarch, Son.*

§This lady, the wife of Dr. Clarke, physician at Epsom, died April 27th, 1757, and is buried in the church of Beckenham, Kent.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

JAMES BEATTIE, LL.D.

Contents.

Page

Life of Dr. James Beattie, ... ii

THE MINSTREL. Book I. 7
Book II. 8

POEMS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

Ode to Retirement, ... 15
—— Hope, ... ib.
Ode on Lord Hay's Birth Day, ... 17

Page

Pigmæo-gerano-machia: The battle of the Pigmies and Cranes, ... 18
The Hares: A Fable, ... 20
Elegy, ... 22
Epitaph: being part of an Inscription for a monument to be erected by a Gentleman to the memory of his Lady, ... 23
The Hermit, ... ib.
Epitaph on the Author, by himself, ... ib.

The Life of Dr. James Beattie.

Dr. James Beattie was born at Laurencekirk, in the county of Kincardine, Scotland, on the 25th day of October, 1735. His father, who was a farmer of no considerable rank, is said to have had a turn for reading and for versifying: but, as he died in 1742, when his son James was only seven years of age, he could have had no great share in forming his mind.

James was sent early to the only school his birthplace afforded, where he passed his time under the instruction of a tutor named Milne, whom he used to represent "as a good grammarian, and tolerably skilled in the Latin language, but destitute of taste, as well as of some other qualifications essential to a good teacher." He is said to have preferred Ovid as a school-author, whom Mr. Beattie afterwards gladly exchanged for Virgil. Virgil he had been accustomed to read with great delight in Ogilvy's and Dryden's translations, as he did Homer in that of Pope; and these, with Thomson's Seasons and Milton's Paradise Lost, of all which he was very early fond, probably gave him that taste for poetry which he afterwards cultivated with so much success. He was already, according to his biographer, inclined to make verses, and among his school-fellows went by the name of the Poet.

At this school he made great proficiency, by unremitting diligence, which, he was sensible, was the only stock he could command; and he appeared to much advantage on his entering Marischal College, Aberdeen, in 1749, where he obtained the first of those bursaries left for the use of students, whose parents are unable to support the entire expenses of academical education. Here he first studied Greek under principal Thomas Blackwell, author of the Inquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer; Letters concerning Mythology; and Memoirs of the Court of Augustus; a teacher, who, with much of the austerity of pedantry, was kind to his diligent scholars, and found in Mr. Beattie a disposition worthy of cultivation and of patronage. The other professor, with whom Mr. Beattie was particularly connected, was Dr. Alexander Gerard, author of the Genius and Evidences of Christianity; Essays on Taste and Genius; and other works. Under these gentlemen, his proficiency, both at college and during the vacations, was very exemplary, and he accumulated a much more various stock of general knowledge than is usual with young men whose destination is the church. The delicacy of his health requiring amusement, he found, as he supposed, all that amusement can give in cultivating his musical talents, which were very considerable. But there is reason to think that his hours of relaxation were too few, and that the earnestness with which he dissuaded his son from excessive study, arose from his repenting that he had not paid more attention to the exercises which promote health.

The only science in which he made no extraordinary proficiency, and to which he even seemed to have a dislike, was mathematics. In this, indeed, he performed the requisite tasks, but was eager to return to subjects of taste or general literature. In every other branch of academical study, he never was satisfied with what he learned within the walls of the college.

In 1753, having gone through every preparatory course of study, he took the degree of master of arts, the only one attainable by students (except of medicine) in any of the universities of Scotland. The first degree of bachelor is not known, and that of doctor of laws or divinity is usually bestowed on application, at any time of life after leaving college, without the necessity of keeping terms. Mr. Beattie, therefore, at this time technically finished his education, and had a profession to seek. He had hitherto been supported by the generous kindness of an elder brother; but he was anxious to exonerate his family from any farther burden. With this laudable view, there being a vacancy for the office of schoolmaster and parish-clerk, to the parish of Fordoun, adjoining to Laurencekirk, he accepted the appointment August 6, 1753. There can be no doubt that he performed the duties of this situation with punctuality, but it was neither suited to his disposition, nor advantageous to his progress in life. The emoluments were very scanty, the site remote and obscure; and there was nothing in it to excite emulation or gratify the ambition which a young man, conscious as he must have been of superior powers and knowledge, might indulge without presumption. He obtained in this place, however, a few friends, particularly Lord Gardenstown, and Lord Monboddo, who distinguished him with encouraging notice; and his imagination was delighted by the beautiful and sublime scenery of the place, which he appears to have contemplated with the eye of a poet. His leisure hours he employed on some

poetical attempts, which, as they were published in the Scots Magazine, with his initials, and sometimes with his place of abode, must have contributed to make him yet more known and respected.

The church of Scotland was at this time the usual resource of well educated young men, and with their academical stores in full memory, there were few difficulties to be surmounted before their entrance on the sacred office. Although this church presents no temptations to ambition, Mr. Beattie appears to have regarded it as the only means by which he could obtain an independent rank in life; and with his diligence, was confident that the transition from the studies of philosophy and ethics to that of divinity, would be easy. He returned, therefore, during the winter to Marischal College, and attended the divinity lectures of Dr. Robert Pollock, of that college, and of professor John Lumsden, of King's, and performed the exercises required by the rules of both. One of his fellow-students informed Sir William Forbes, that during their attendance at the divinity-hall, he heard Mr. Beattie deliver a discourse, which met with much commendation, but of which it was remarked by the audience, that he spoke poetry in prose.

While the church seemed his only prospect, and one which he never contemplated with satisfaction, although few young men lived a more pious and regular life, there occurred, in 1757, a vacancy for one of the masters of the grammar-school of Aberdeen, a situation of considerable importance in all respects. The school, which is a public foundation, is conducted by a rector, or head master, and three subordinate masters; the whole is in the patronage of the magistrates of the city, who are, however, governed in their choice by the issue of a very severe trial of the candidate's ability, carried on by the professors of the university. On this occasion, Mr. Beattie was advised to become a candidate; but he was diffident of his qualifications, and did not think himself so fully possessed of the grammatical niceties of the Latin language, as to be able to answer readily, any question that might be put to him by older and more experienced judges. In every part of his life, it may be here observed, Beattie appears to have formed an exact estimate of his own talents; and in the present instance he failed just where he expected to fail, rather in the circumstantial than the essential requisites for the situation to which he aspired. The other candidate was accordingly preferred. But Beattie's attempt was attended with so little loss of reputation, that a second vacancy occurring a few months after, and two candidates appearing, both unqualified for the office, it was presented to him by the magistrates in the most handsome manner, without the form of a trial, and he immediately entered upon it in June, 1758. He was now in the midst of literary society, and had easy access to books, and his colloquial talents daily increased the number of his friends. His emoluments were not great, but his situation had a consequence in the opinion of the public, which to so young a man was not a little flattering.

He had not long been an usher at this school before he published a volume of poems. An author's first appearance is always an important era. Mr. Beattie's was certainly attended with circumstances that are not now common. This volume was announced to the public in a more humble manner than the present state of literature is thought to demand in similar cases. On the 10th of March, 1760, not the volume itself, but Proposals for printing original Poems and Translations were issued. The poems appeared accordingly on the 16th of February, 1761, and were published both in London and Edinburgh. They consisted partly of original composition, and partly of the pieces formerly printed in the Scots Magazine, but altered and corrected; a practice which Beattie carried almost to excess in all his poetical works.

The praise bestowed on this volume was very flattering. The English critics who then dispensed the rewards of literature, considered it as an acquisition to the republic of letters, and pronounced that, since Mr. Gray (whom in their opinion Mr. Beattie had chosen for his model) they had not met with a poet of more harmonious numbers, more pleasing imagination, or more spirited expression. This verdict they endeavoured to confirm by extracts from the Ode to Peace, and the Triumph of Melancholy. But notwithstanding praises which so evidently tended to give a currency to the poems, and which were probably repeated with eagerness by the friends who had encouraged the publication, the author, upon more serious consideration, was so dissatisfied with this volume as to destroy every copy he could procure. Nor was this a sudden or splenetic humour in Beattie. Some years after, when his taste and judgment became fully matured, he refused to acknowledge above four of them; namely, Retirement, Ode to Hope, Elegy on a Lady, and the Hares, and these he almost re-wrote before he would permit them to be printed with the Minstrel.

But notwithstanding the lowly opinion of the author, these poems, during their first circulation, which was chiefly in manuscript, contributed so much to the general reputation he acquired, that he was considered as an honour to his country, and deserving of a higher rank among her favoured sons. Accordingly a vacancy happening in Marischal College, his friends made such earnest applications in his behalf, that in September, 1760, he was appointed by the royal patent professor of philosophy. His department in this honourable office extended to moral philosophy and

logic; and it added, in his mind, a very affecting importance to it, that his was the last course of instruction previous to the students leaving college, and dispersing themselves in the world.

This promotion was sudden and unexpected; and it may be supposed that a youth of twenty-five must have been ill prepared to give a course of lectures, and a train of instructions on subjects which had been but imperfectly treated by veteran philosophers. Yet it is evident from his printed works, that most of the subjects which belong to his province, had been familiarized to him by a long course of reading and thinking, and that he had very early accustomed himself to composition; and it is highly probable that he brought into the professor's chair, such a mass of materials, as could with very little trouble be moulded into shape for his immediate purpose. It is certain, however, that such was his diligence, and such his love of those studies, that within a few years he was not only enabled to deliver an admirable course of lectures on moral philosophy and logic, but also to prepare for the press those works on which his fame rests; all of which, there is some reason to think, were written, or nearly written, before he gave the world the result of his philosophical studies in the celebrated Essay on Truth. It may be added likewise, that the rank he had at this time attained in the university entitled him to associate more on a level with Reid and with Campbell, with Gerard and with Gregory, men whose opinions were in many points congenial, and who have all been hailed by the sister country among the revivers of Scoteh literature. With the gentlemen already mentioned, and a few others, he formed a society, or club, for the discussion of literary and philosophical subjects. A part of their entertainment was the reading a short essay, composed by each member in his turn. It is supposed that the works of Reid, Campbell, Beattie, Gregory, and Gerard, or at least the outlines of them, were first discussed in this society, either in the form of essays, or of a question for familiar conversation.

In 1765, Mr. Beattie published the Judgment of Paris, a poem, in 4to. Its design was to prove that virtue alone is capable of affording a gratification adequate to our whole nature; the pursuits of ambition or sensuality promising only partial happiness, as being adapted not to our whole constitution, but only to a part of it. The reception of this poem, however, was unfavourable, and although he added it to a new addition of his poems in 1766, yet it was never again reprinted, and even his biographer has declined reviving its memory by an extract.

Although he had acquired a station in which his talents were displayed with great advantage, and commanded a very high degree of respect, the publication of the Essay on Truth was the great era of his life; for this work carried his fame far beyond all local bounds and local partialities. It is not, however, necessary to enter minutely into the history of a work so well known.

When this work was completed, so many difficulties occurred in procuring it to be published, that his friends, Sir William Forbes and Mr. Arbuthnot, were obliged to become the purchasers, unknown to him, at a price with which they thought he would be satisfied. Sir William accordingly wrote to him that the manuscript was sold for fifty guineas, as the price of the first edition. In a very grateful letter addressed to his friends, he answered that "the price really exceeded his warmest expectations."

The first edition of this essay was published in an octavo volume, in 1770, and bought up with such avidity that a second was called for, and published in the following year. The interval was short, but as the work had excited the public attention in an extraordinary degree, the result of the public opinion had reached the author's ear, and to this second edition he added a postscript, in vindication of a certain degree of warmth of which he had been accused.

The Essay on Truth, whatever objections were made to it, (and it met with very few public opponents,) had a more extensive circulation than probably any work of the kind ever published. This may be partly attributed to the charms of that popular style in which the author conveyed his sentiments on subjects which his adversaries had artfully disguised in a metaphysical jargon, the meaning of which they could vary at pleasure; but the eagerness with which it was sought arose chiefly from the just praise bestowed upon it by the most distinguished friends of religion and learning in Great Britain. With many of these, of high rank, both in church and state, the author had the satisfaction of dating his acquaintance from the publication of this work. There appeared, indeed, in the public in general, an honourable wish to grace the triumph of sound reasoning over pernicious sophistry. Hence, in less than four years, five large editions of the Essay were sold. It was translated into several foreign languages, and attracted the notice of many eminent persons in France, Germany, Holland, Italy, and other parts of the continent.

Among other marks of respect, the University of Oxford conferred the degree of Doctor of Laws on the author; and on his second arrival in London, he was graciously received by the king, who bestowed a pension on him, and admitted him to a private conference. It was in July, 1771, that Dr. Beattie first visited London, and commenced a personal acquaintance with men of the highest eminence, with Lord Mansfield and Lord Lyttelton, Drs. Hurd, Porteus, Johnson, Mr Burke

and, indeed, the whole of the literary society, whose conversations have been so pleasantly detailed by Mr. Boswell. He returned to Scotland with a mind elevated and cheered by the praise, the kindness, and the patronage of the good and great.

Soon after his visit to London, he was solicited, by a very flattering proposal, sent through the hands of Dr. Porteus, to enter into the church of England. A similar offer had been made some time before, by the Archbishop of York, but declined. It was now renewed with more importunity, and produced from him the important reasons which obliged him still to decline an offer which he could not but consider as "great and generous." By these reasons, communicated in a letter to Dr. Porteus, we find that he was apprehensive of the injury that might be done to the cause he had espoused, if his enemies should have any ground for asserting that he had written his Essay on Truth, with a view to promotion: and he was likewise of opinion that it might have the appearance of levity and insincerity, and even of want of principle, were he to quit, without any other *apparent* motive than that of bettering his circumstances, the church of which he had uniformly been a member. Other reasons he assigned, on this occasion, of some, but less weight, all which prevailed on his friends to desist from farther solicitation, while they honoured the motives by which he was influenced. In the same year he refused the offer of a professor's chair in the University of Edinburgh, considering his present situation as best adapted to his habits and to his usefulness, and apprehending that the formation of a new society of friends might not be so easy or agreeable in a place where the enemies of his principles were numerous. To some of his friends, however, these reasons did not appear very sound.

Although Mr. Beattie had seemingly withdrawn his claims as a poet, by canceling as many copies of his juvenile attempts as he could procure, he was not so unconscious of his talents, as to relinquish what was an early and favourite pursuit, and in which he had probably passed some of his most delightful hours. A few months after the appearance of the Essay on Truth, he published the first book of the Minstrel, in 4to, but without his name. In consequence of this omission, the poem was examined with all that rigour of criticism which may be expected in the case of a work, for which the author's name can neither afford protection nor apology. He was praised for having adopted the measure of Spenser, because he had the happy enthusiasm of that writer to support and render it agreeable; but objections were made to the limitation of his plan to the profession of the Minstrel, when so much superior interest might be excited by carrying him on through the practice of it. It was objected, also, that the sentiment of the first stanza appeared too close a copy from a passage in Gray's celebrated elegy; and several lines were pointed out as unequal, and inconsistent with the general measure, or with the dignity of the subject. These objections appear to have coincided with the author's reconsideration: and he not only adopted various alterations recommended by his friends, particularly by Mr. Gray, but introduced others, which made the subsequent editions of his poems far more perfect than the first.

The Minstrel, however, in its first form, contained so many passages of genuine poetry, the poetry of nature and of feeling, and was so eagerly applauded by those whose right of opinion was incontestable, that it soon ran through four editions; and in 1774, the author produced the second book. This, although of a more philosophical cast, and less rich in those descriptions which appeal to every heart, yet contained imagery so noble, and so many proofs of the "lively, plastic imagination," as to place the author in the first ranks of modern poetry. As the success of the second book was not inferior to that of the first, it was the general wish that the author would fulfil his promise by completing the interesting subject; but the increasing business of education, the cares of a family, and the state of his health, originally delicate, and never robust, deprived him of the time and thought which he considered as requisite. In 1777, however, he was induced to publish the two parts of the Minstrel together, and to add a few of his juvenile poems. In his advertisement he informs us, that "they are all of which he is willing to be considered as the author." About this time some poems were ascribed to him which he never wrote; and those pieces which he wished to consign to oblivion, were published by persons who hoped to profit by the established fame of the author.

During the preceding year, (1776) he prepared for the press a new edition of the Essay on Truth, in a more elegant form than it had hitherto worn, and attended with circumstances of public esteem which were very flattering. The subscription money was a guinea, but we are not certain that subscribers were limited to that sum. The list of subscribers amounted to four hundred and seventy-six names, of men and women of the first rank in life, and of all the distinguished literary characters of the time. The copies subscribed for amounted to seven hundred and thirty-two, so that no inconsiderable sum must have accrued in this delicate manner to the author. Dr. Beattie was by no means rich; his pension was only two hundred pounds, and the annual amount of his professorship never reached that sum.

The Essays added to this volume, and which

he afterwards printed separately in octavo, were on Poetry and Music: on Laughter and Ludicrous Composition; and on the Utility of Classical Learning. The first, which was written in 1762, when the author had only reached his twenty-seventh year, evinces a great fund of reading, and such acquaintance with ancient and modern literature, and such discrimination in objects of criticism, as are rarely found in persons of that age.

During a visit to the metropolis, in 1784, Dr. Beattie submitted to the Bishop of London, with whose friendship he had long been honoured, a part of a work which at that prelate's desire he published in 1786, entitled, Evidences of the Christian Religion briefly and plainly stated, 2 vols. 12mo. This likewise formed part of his concluding lectures to his class, and he generally dictated an abstract of it to them in the course of the session.

In the preface to his Dissertations, he intimated a design of publishing the whole of his Lectures on Moral Science, but from this he was diverted. He was encouraged, however, to present to the public, in a correct and somewhat enlarged form, the abstract which he used to dictate to his scholars. Accordingly, in 1790, he published his Elements of Moral Science, vol. i. 8vo.

In vol. ii. there occurs a dissertation against the slave trade, which the author informs us he wrote in 1778, with a view to a separate publication. He exposed the weak defences set up for that abominable traffic with great acuteness, and thus had the honour to contribute to that mass of conviction, which at length became irresistible, and delivered the British nation from her greatest reproach.

To the second volume of the Transactions of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, published in 1790, he contributed Remarks on some Passages of the Sixth Book of the Æneid. This was, in fact, a dissertation on the Mythology of the Romans, as poetically described by Virgil, in the episode of the descent of Æneas into hell; and his object was to vindicate his favourite poet from the charge of impiety, &c. brought against him by Warburton and others. In the same year he is said to have superintended an edition of Addison's periodical papers, published at Edinburgh, in 4 vols. 8vo. In this, however, he contributed only a few notes to Tickell's Life of Addison, and to Dr. Johnson's remarks. It were to be wished he had done more; Addison never had a warmer admirer, nor a more successful imitator. He always recommended Addison's style to his pupils, and it is evident from the whole of his works that it was his own model.

In 1794, appeared the last work our author composed, and its history requires some notice of his family. In 1767, he married Miss Mary Dun, daughter of Dr. James Dun, rector or head master of the grammar school of Aberdeen, a man of great personal worth, and an excellent classical scholar.

With this lady Dr. Beattie enjoyed for many years as much felicity as the married state can afford; and when she visited London with him, she shared amply in the respect paid to him, and in the esteem of his illustrious friends. By her he had two sons, James Hay, so named from the Earl of Errol, one of his old and steady friends; and Montague, from the celebrated Mrs. Montague, in whose house Dr. Beattie frequently resided when in London. While these children were very young, Mrs. Beattie was seized with an indisposition, which, in spite of all care and skill, terminated in the painful necessity of separation from her husband. The care of the children now devolved on the father, whose sensibility received such a shock from the melancholy insanity alluded to, as could only be aggravated by an apprehension that the consequences of Mrs. Beattie's disorder might not be confined to herself. This alarm, which often preyed on his spirits, proved happily without foundation. His children grew up without the smallest appearance of hereditary evil; but when they had just begun to repay his care by a display of early genius, sweetness of temper and filial affection, he was compelled to resign them both to an untimely grave. His eldest son died November 19, 1790, in his twenty-second year; and his youngest March 14, 1796, in his eighteenth year. The death of the latter was occasioned by a rapid fever. The suddenness of the shock made it more deeply felt by the father, as he had not yet recovered from the loss of the eldest, who was taken from him by the slow process of consumption.

Soon after the death of James Hay, his father drew up an account of his Life and Character; to which were added, Essays and Fragments, written by this extraordinary youth. Dr. Beattie was afterwards induced to permit the Life and some of the Essays and Fragments to be printed for publication. The Life is a most interesting and affecting narrative. It is impossible, indeed, to contemplate without emotion the exquisite tenderness of an affectionate and mourning parent, soothing himself by the remembrance of filial piety and departed excellence, and humbly, yet fondly, endeavouring to engage the sympathies of the world of a genius that might have proved one of its brightest ornaments.

After the loss of this amiable youth, who in 1787 had been appointed successor to his father, and had occasionally lectured in the professor's chair, Dr. Beattie resumed that employment himself, and continued it, although with intervals of sickness and depression, until the unexpected death of his

second and last child, in 1796. His hopes of a successor of his name and family, had probably been revived in this youth, who exhibited many proofs of early genius, and for some time before his death had prosecuted his studies with great assiduity. But here too he was compelled again to subscribe to the uncertainty of all human prospects. Great, however, as the affliction was, it would be pleasing to be able to add that he acquiesced with pious resignation, and laid hold on the hopes he knew so well how to recommend, and which yet might have cheered, if not gladdened his declining life. But from this period he began to withdraw from society, and brooded over the sorrows of his family, until they overpowered his feelings, and abstracted him from all the comforts of friendship and all powers of consolation. Of the state of his mind, Sir William Forbes has given an instance so touching, that no apology can be necessary for introducing it here.

"The death of his only surviving child completely unhinged the mind of Dr. Beattie, the first symptoms of which, ere many days had elapsed, was a temporary but almost total loss of memory, respecting his son. Many times he could not recollect what had become of him: and after searching in every room in the house, he would say to his neice, Mrs. Glennie, 'You may think it strange, but I must ask you if I have a son, and where he is?" She then felt herself under the painful necessity of bringing to his recollection his son Montague's sufferings, which always restored him to reason. And he would often, with many tears, express his thankfulness that he had no child, saying, 'How could I have borne to see their elegant minds mangled with madness!" When he looked for the last time, on the dead body of his son, he said 'I have now done with the world:' he ever after seemed to act as if he thought so."

The last three years of his life were passed in hopeless solitude, and he even relinquished his correspondence with many of those remote friends with whom he had long enjoyed the soothing interchange of elegant sentiment and friendly attachment. His health, in this voluntary confinement, gradually decayed, and extreme and premature debility, occasioned by two paralytic strokes, terminated his good and useful life on the 18th day of August, 1803. His reputation was so well founded and so extensive, that he was universally lamented as a loss to the republic of letters, and particularly to the University to which he had been so long a public benefactor and an honour.

Of his general character a fair estimate may be formed from his works, and it is no small praise that his life and writings were in strict conformity with each other.

Whatever reputation Dr. Beattie enjoyed from his philosophical and critical works, his praise was yet higher in all the personal relations of public and private life. His excellence as an instructor may be gathered from his printed works; but it remains to be added, that few men have exceeded him in anxious and kind attentions to his pupils. It was his practice, while they were under his care, to invite them by small parties to his house, and unbend his mind in gay conversation, encouraging them to speak with familiarity on common topics, and to express their doubts with freedom on any subjects connected with their studies.

None were more affected by his melancholy retreat from society, than those who could recollect him in his happier days of health and hope. He had a keen relish for social intercourse, and was remarkably cheerful and communicative. It has not yet been mentioned, but it may be observed from various parts of his writings, that he had a turn for humour, and a quick sense of the ridiculous. This, however, was so chastened by the elegance of his taste, and the benevolence of his disposition, that whatever fell from him of that kind was devoid of coarseness or asperity. In conversation he never endeavoured to gain superiority, or to compel attention, but contrived to take his just share, without seeming to interrupt the loquacity of others. He had, however, what most men have who are jealous of their reputation, a degree of reserve in promiscuous company, which he entirely discarded among those whom he loved and in whom he confided.

In London it is yet remembered that his colloquial talents were much admired, and no doubt procured him a long continuance of those friendships with men of rank, which are rarely to be preserved without something more than the mere possession of genius. His modest and engaging manners rendered him equally acceptable to the courtly and elegant Mansfield, and to the rough and unbending Johnson. To Mrs. Montague's literary parties he was ever most acceptable; and he lived with the then bishop of London, with Sir Joshua Reynolds, and with Mr. Burke, on terms of the easiest intimacy. If flattery could have spoiled him, he had enough; as in England, for whatever reason, his character always stood higher even than in his own country.

Dr. Beattie's person was rather above the middle size. His countenance was very mild, and his smile uncommonly placid and benign. His eyes were remarkably piercing and expressive, and there was a general composure in his features which Sir Joshua Reynolds has given admirably in the picture, which has been engraven for his life by Sir William Forbes.

His frame was apparently stout, and even robust, but this certainly was not the case. Its original conformation may have been that of strength

and vigour; but he had frequent interruptions from sickness, at a very early period of life. As he advanced he discovered all the delicate and valetudinary temperament of genius. At the age of forty-five he had the walk and manner and precautions that are usually observable at sixty, and was much afflicted with head-ache, and other symptoms that are commonly called nervous.

The Life of Dr. Beattie published by Sir William Forbes, exhibits him in the character of an epistolary writer. His letters embrace a very large portion of the literary history of his time, but it may be doubted whether they have always the ease and vivacity which are expected in this department of composition.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

JAMES BEATTIE, LL.D.

The Minstrel;

OR,

THE PROGRESS OF GENIUS.

PREFACE.

THE design was, to trace the progress of a poetical genius, born in a rude age, from the first dawning of fancy and reason, till that period at which he may be supposed capable of appearing in the world as a Minstrel, that is, an itinerant Poet and Musician:—a character which, according to the notions of our forefathers, was not only respectable, but sacred.

I have endeavoured to imitate Spenser in the measure of his verse, and in the harmony, simplicity, and variety of his composition. Antique expressions I have avoided; admitting, however, some old words, where they seemed to suit the subject: but I hope none will be found that are now obsolete, or in any degree not intelligible to a reader of English poetry.

To those who may be disposed to ask, what could induce me to write in so difficult a measure, I can only answer, that it pleases my ear, and seems, from its Gothic structure and original, to bear some relation to the subject and spirit of the Poem. It admits both simplicity and magnificence of sound and of language, beyond any other stanza that I am acquainted with. It allows the sententiousness of the couplet, as well as the more complex modulation of blank verse. What some critics have remarked, of its uniformity growing at last tiresome to the ear, will be found to hold true only when the poetry is faulty in other respects.

THE MINSTREL.

Me vero primum dulces ante omnia Musæ,
Quarum sacra fero, ingeti perculsus amore,
Accipiant.— *Virg.*

BOOK I.

I.

AH! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar;
Ah! who can tell how many a soul sublime
Has felt the influence of malignant star,
And waged with Fortune an eternal war
Checked by the scoff of Pride, by Envy's frown,
And Poverty's unconquerable bar,
In life's low vale remote has pined alone,
Then drop'd into the grave, unpitied and unknown.

II.

And yet, the languor of inglorious days
Not equally oppressive is to all:
Him, who ne'er listened to the voice of praise,
The silence of neglect can ne'er appal.
There are, who deaf to mad Ambition's call,
Would shrink to hear the obstreperous trump of Fame;
Supremely blessed, if to their portion fall
Health, competence, and peace. Nor higher aim
Had *he* whose simple tale these artless lines proclaim.

III.

The rolls of fame I will not now explore;
Nor need I here describe in learned lay,
How forth the minstrel fared in days of yore,
Right glad of heart, though homely in array;
His waving locks and beard all hoary gray:
While, from his bending shoulder, decent hung
His harp, the sole companion of his way,
Which to the whistling wind responsive rung;
And ever, as he went, some merry lay he sung.

IV.

Fret not thyself, thou glittering child of pride,
That a poor villager inspires my strain;
With thee let Pageantry and Power abide:
The gentle Muses haunt the sylvan reign;
Where through wild groves at eve the lonely swain
Enraptured roams, to gaze on Nature's charms:
They hate the sensual, and scorn the vain,
The parasite their influence never warms,
Nor him whose sordid soul the love of gold alarms.

V.

Though richest hues the peacock's plumes adorn,
Yet horror screams from his discordant throat.
Rise, sons of harmony, and hail the morn,
While warbling larks on russet pinions float;
Or seek at noon the woodland scene remote,
Where the gray linnets carol from the hill:
O let them ne'er, with artificial note,
To please a tyrant, strain the little bill,
But sing what heaven inspires, and wander where they will.

VI.

Liberal, not lavish, is kind Nature's hand;
Nor was perfection made for man below:
Yet all her schemes with nicest art are planned,
Good counteracting ill, and gladness wo.
With gold and gems of Chilian mountains glow;
If bleak and barren Scotia's hills arise:
There plague and poison, lust and rapine grow:
Here peaceful are the vales, and pure the skies,
And freedom fires the soul, and sparkles in the eyes.

VII.

Then grieve not thou, to whom the indulgent Muse
Vouchsafes a portion of celestial fire;
Nor blame the partial Fates, if they refuse
The imperial banquet, and the rich attire:
Know thine own worth, and reverence the lyre.
Wilt thou debase the heart which God refined?
No; let thy heaven-taught soul to heaven aspire,
To fancy, freedom, harmony, resigned;
Ambition's groveling crew for ever left behind.

VIII.

Canst thou forego the pure ethereal soul
In each fine sense so exquisitely keen,
On the dull couch of Luxury to loll,
Stung with disease and stupified with spleen;
Fain to implore the aid of Flattery's screen,
E'en from thyself thy loathsome heart to hide,
(The mansion then no more of joy serene)
Where Fear, Distrust, Malevolence, abide,
And impotent Desire, and disappointed Pride!

IX.

O, how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields!
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even,
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of heaven,
O how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven!

X.

These charms shall work thy soul's eternal health,
And love, and gentleness, and joy, impart:
But these thou must renounce, if lust of wealth
E'er wins its way to thy corrupted heart;
For, ah! it poisons like a scorpion's dart;
Prompting the ungenerous wish, the selfish scheme,
The stern resolve, unmoved by pity's smart,
The troublous day, and long distressful dream—
Return, my roving Muse, resume thy purposed theme.

XI.

There lived in gothic days, as legends tell,
A shepherd-swain, a man of low degree:
Whose sires, perchance, in fairy-land might dwell,
Sicilian groves, or vales of Arcady.
But he, I ween, was of the north countrie:*
A nation famed for song, and beauty's charms;
Zealous, yet modest; innocent, though free;
Patient of toil; serene, amidst alarms;
Inflexible in faith; invincible in arms.

XII.

The shepherd-swain of whom I mention made,
On Scotia's mountains fed his little flock;
The sickle, scythe, or plough, he never swayed;
An honest heart was almost all his stock;

* There is hardly an ancient ballad, or romance, wherein a minstrel or harper appears, but he is characterized, by way of eminence, to have been "of the north countrie." It is probable, that under this appellation were formerly comprehended all the provinces to the north of the Trent.—*See Percy's Essay on the English Minstrels.*

His drink the living water from the rock:
The milky dams supplied his board, and lent
Their kindly fleece to baffle winter's shock;
And he, though oft with dust and sweat besprent,
Did guide and guard their wanderings, wheresoe'er they went.

XIII.

From labour health, from health contentment springs,
Contentment opes the source of every joy:
He envied not, he never thought of, kings;
Nor from those appetites sustained annoy,
That chance may frustrate, or indulgence cloy:
Nor Fate his calm and humble hopes beguiled;
He mourned no recreant friend, nor mistress coy,
For on his vows the blameless Phœbe smiled,
And her alone he loved, and loved her from a child.

XIV.

No jealousy their dawn of love o'ercast,
Nor blasted were their wedded days with strife;
Each season looked delightful as it past,
To the fond husband and the faithful wife:
Beyond the lowly vale of shepherd-life
They never roamed; secure beneath the storm
Which in ambition's lofty land is rife,
Where peace and love are cankered by the worm
Of pride, each bud of joy industrious to deform.

XV.

The wight, whose tales these artless lines unfold,
Was all the offspring of this humble pair:
His birth no oracle or seer foretold:
No prodigy appeared in earth or air,
Nor aught that might a strange event declare.
You guess each circumstance of Edwin's birth;
The parent's transport, and the parent's care;
The gossip's prayer for wealth, and wit, and worth;
And one long summer-day of indolence and mirth.

XVI.

And yet poor Edwin was no vulgar boy;
Deep thought oft seemed to fix his infant eye:
Dainties he heeded not, nor gaude nor toy,
Save one short pipe of rudest minstrelsy.
Silent, when glad; affectionate, though shy;
And now his look was most demurely sad,
And now he laughed aloud, yet none knew why;
The neighbours stared and sighed, yet blessed the lad;
Some deemed him wondrous wise, and some believed him mad

XVII.

But why should I his childish feats display?
Concourse, and noise, and toil, he ever fled;
Nor cared to mingle in the clamorous fray
Of squabbling imps, but to the forest sped,
Or roamed at large the lonely mountain's head;
Or, where the maze of some bewildered stream
To deep untrodden groves his footsteps led,
There would he wander wild, till Phœbus' beam,
Shot from the western cliff, released the weary team.

XVIII.

The' exploit of strength, dexterity, or speed,
To him nor vanity nor joy could bring:
His heart, from cruel sport estranged, would bleed
To work the wo of any living thing,
By trap or net; by arrow or by sling;
These he detested, those he scorned to wield:
He wished to be the guardian, not the king,
Tyrant far less, or traitor of the field:
And sure the sylvan reign unbloody joy might yield.

XIX.

Lo! where the stripling, wrapt in wonder, roves
Beneath the precipice o'erhung with pine;
And sees, on high, amid the' encircling groves,
From cliff to cliff the foaming torrents shine:
While waters, woods, and winds, in concert join,
And Echo swells the chorus to the skies.
Would Edwin this majestic scene resign
For aught the huntsman's puny craft supplies?
Ah! no: he better knows great Nature's charms to prize.

XX.

And oft he traced the uplands, to survey,
When o'er the sky advanced the kindling dawn,
The crimson cloud, blue main, and mountain gray,
And lake, dim gleaming on the smoky lawn;
Far to the west the long long vale withdrawn,
Where twilight loves to linger for a while;
And now he faintly kens the bounding fawn,
A villager abroad at early toil.—
But lo! the sun appears! and heaven, earth, ocean, smile.

XXI.

And oft the craggy cliff he loved to climb,
When all in mist the world below was lost:
What dreadful pleasure! there to stand sublime.
Like shipwrecked mariner on desert coast,
And view the' enormous waste of vapour tost
In billows, lengthening to the' horizon round,
Now scooped in gulfs, with mountains now embossed!

And hear the voice of mirth and song rebound,
Flocks, herds, and waterfalls, along the hoar profound!

XXII.

In truth he was a strange and wayward wight,
Fond of each gentle, and each dreadful scene:
In darkness, and in storm, he found delight;
Nor less, than when on ocean-wave serene
The southern sun diffused his dazzling shene.
E'en sad vicissitude amused his soul:
And if a sigh would sometimes intervene,
And down his cheek a tear of pity roll,
A sigh, a tear, so sweet, he wished not to control.

XXIII.

"O ye wild groves, O where is now your bloom?"
(The Muse interprets thus his tender thought)
"Your flowers, your verdure, and your balmy gloom,
Of late so grateful in the hour of drought?
Why do the birds, that song and rapture brought
To all your bowers, their mansions now forsake?
Ah! why has fickle chance this ruin wrought?
For now the storm howls mournful through the brake,
And the dead foliage flies in many a shapeless flake.

XXIV.

"Where now the rill, melodious, pure, and cool,
And meads, with life, and mirth, and beauty crowned!
Ah! see, the' unsightly slime, and sluggish pool,
Have all the solitary vale imbrowned;
Fled each fair form, and mute each melting sound,
The raven croaks forlorn on naked spray:
And, hark! the river, bursting every mound,
Down the vale thunders; and with wasteful sway,
Uproots the grove, and rolls the shattered rocks away.

XXV.

"Yet such the destiny of all on earth;
So flourishes and fades majestic Man!
Fair is the bud his vernal morn brings forth,
And fostering gales a while the nursling fan:
O smile, ye heavens, serene; ye mildews wan,
Ye blighting whirlwinds, spare his balmy prime,
Nor lessen of his life the little span:
Borne on the swift, though silent, wings of Time,
Old age comes on apace to ravage all the clime.

XXVI.

"And be it so. Let those deplore their doom,
Whose hope still grovels in this dark sojourn:
But lofty souls, who look beyond the tomb,
Can smile at Fate, and wonder how they mourn.
Shall spring to these sad scenes no more return?
Is yonder wave the sun's eternal bed?—
Soon shall the orient with new lustre burn,
And spring shall soon her vital influence shed,
Again attune the grove, again adorn the mead.

XXVII.

"Shall I be left abandoned in the dust,
When Fate, relenting, lets the flower revive
Shall Nature's voice, to man alone unjust,
Bid him, though doomed to perish, hope to live?
It is for this fair Virtue oft must strive
With disappointment, penury, and pain?—
No: Heaven's immortal spring shall yet arrive
And man's majestic beauty bloom again,
Bright through the' eternal year of Love's triumphant reign."

XXVIII.

This truth sublime his simple sire had taught,
In sooth, 'twas almost all the shepherd knew,
No subtle nor superfluous lore he sought,
Nor ever wished his Edwin to pursue:—
"Let man's own sphere," (quoth he) "confine his view;
Be man's peculiar work his sole delight."
And much, and oft, he warned him to eschew
Falsehood and guile, and aye maintain the right,
By pleasure unseduced, unawed by lawless might.

XXIX.

"And from the prayer of Want, and plaint of Wo,
O never, never turn away thine ear;
Forlorn in this bleak wilderness below,
Ah! what were man, should Heaven refuse to hear!
To others do (the law is not severe)
What to thyself thou wishest to be done:
Forgive thy foes; and love thy parents dear,
And friends, and native land; nor those alone;
All human weal and wo learn thou to make thine own."

XXX.

See in the rear of the warm sunny shower,
The visionary boy from shelter fly!
For now the storm of summer-rain is o'er,
And cool, and fresh, and fragrant, is the sky!
And, lo! in the dark east, expanded high,
The rainbow brightens to the setting sun:
Fond fool, that deem'st the streaming glory nigh,
How vain the chase thine ardour has begun!
'Tis fled afar, ere half thy purposed race be run.

XXXI.

Yet couldst thou learn, that thus it fares with age,
When pleasure, wealth, or power, the bosom warm,

This baffled hope might tame thy manhood's rage,
And disappointment of her sting disarm.—
But why should foresight thy fond heart alarm?
Perish the lore that deadens young desire!
Pursue, poor imp, th' imaginary charm,
Indulge gay Hope, and Fancy's pleasing fire:
Fancy and Hope too soon shall of themselves expire.

XXXII.

When the long-sounding curfew from afar
Loaded with loud lament the lonely gale,
Young Edwin, lighted by the evening star,
Lingering and listening, wandered down the vale:
There would he dream of graves, and corses pale:
And ghosts, that to the charnel-dungeon throng,
And drag a length of clanking chain, and wail,
Till silenced by the owl's terrific song,
Or blasts that shrieks by fits the shuddering isles along.

XXXIII.

Or, when the setting moon, in crimson dyed,
Hung o'er the dark and melancholy deep,
To haunted stream, remote from man he hied,
Where fays of yore their revels wont to keep;
And there let Fancy roam at large, till sleep
A vision brought to his intranced sight:
And first, a wildly-murmuring wind 'gan creep
Shrill to his ringing ear; then tapers bright,
With instantaneous gleam, illumed the vault of Night.

XXXIV.

Anon, in view a portal's blazoned arch
Arose; the trumpet bids the valves unfold;
And forth an host of little warriors march,
Grasping the diamond lance, and targe of gold:
Their look was gentle, their demeanor bold,
And green their helms, and green their silk attire;
And here and there, right venerably old,
The long robed minstrels wake the warbling wire,
And some with mellow breath the martial pipe inspire.

XXXV.

With merriment, and song, and timbrels clear,
A troop of dames from myrtle-bowers advance;
The little warriors doff the targe and spear,
And loud enlivening strains provoke the dance:
They meet, they dart away, they wheel askance;
To right, to left, they thrid the flying maze;
Now bound aloft with vigorous spring, then glance
Rapid along: with many-coloured rays
Of tapers, gems, and gold, the echoing forests blaze.

XXXVI.

The dream is fled. Proud harbinger of day,
Who scar'dst the vision with thy clarion shrill,
Fell chanticleer! who oft has reft away
My fancied good, and brought substantial ill!
O to thy cursed scream, discordant still,
Let Harmony aye shut her gentle ear,
Thy boastful mirth, let jealous rivals spill,
Insult thy crest, and glossy pinions tear,
And ever in thy dreams the ruthless fox appear.

XXXVII.

Forbear, my Muse. Let Love attune thy lne.
Revoke the spell. Thine Edwin frets not so:—
For how should he at wicked chance repine,
Who feels from every chance amusement flow?
E'en now his eyes with smiles of rapture glow,
As on he wanders through the scenes of morn,
Where the fresh flowers in living lustre blow,
Where thousand pearls the dewy lawns adorn,
A thousand notes of joy in every breeze are born.

XXXVIII.

But who the melodies of morn can tell?
The wild brook babbling down the mountain side;
The lowing herd; the sheepfold's simple bell;
The pipe of early shepherd dim descried
In the lone valley; echoing far and wide
The clamorous horn along the cliffs above;
The hollow murmur of the ocean-tide;
The hum of bees, and linnet's lay of love,
And the full choir that wakes the universal grove.

XXXIX.

The cottage-curs at early pilgrim bark;
Crowned with her pail the tripping milkmaid sings;
The whistling ploughman stalks afield; and, hark!
Down the rough slope the ponderous wagon rings;
Through rustling corn the hare astonished springs;
Slow tolls the village clock the drowsy hour;
The partridge bursts away on whirring wings;
Deep mourns the turtle in sequestered bower,
And shrill lark carols clear from her aërial tour

XL.

O Nature, how in every charm supreme!
Whose votaries feast on raptures ever new!
O for the voice and fire of seraphim,
To sing thy glories with devotion due!
Blest'd be the day I 'scaped the wrangling crew,
From Pyrrho's maze, and Epicurus' sty;
And held high converse with the godlike few,
Who to th' enraptured heart, and ear, and eye,
Teach beauty, virtue, truth, and love, and melody.

XLI.

Hence! ye, who snare and stupefy the mind,
Sophists, of beauty, virtue, joy, the bane!
Greedy and fell, though impotent and blind,
Who spread your filthy nets in Truth's fair fane,
And ever ply your venomed fangs amain!
Hence to dark Error's den, whose rankling slime
First gave you form, hence! lest the muse should deign,
(Though loth on theme so mean to waste a rhyme)
With vengeance to pursue your sacrilegious crime.

XLII.

But hail, ye mighty masters of the lay,
Nature's true sons, the friends of man and truth!
Whose song, sublimely sweet, serenely gay,
Amused my childhood, and informed my youth.
O let your spirit still my bosom sooth;
Inspire my dreams, and my wild wanderings guide!
Your voice each rugged path of life can smooth;
For well I know, wherever ye reside,
There harmony and peace and innocence abide.

XLIII.

Ah me! abandoned on the lonesome plain,
As yet poor Edwin never knew your lore,
Save when against the winter's drenching rain,
And driving snow, the cottage shut the door:
Then, as instructed by tradition hoar,
Her legends when the Beldam 'gan impart,
Or chaunt the old heroic ditty o'er,
Wonder and joy ran thrilling to his heart;
Much he the tale admired, but more the tuneful art.

XLIV.

Various and strange was the long-winded tale;
And halls, and knights, and feats of arms, displayed;
Or merry swains, who quaff the nut-brown ale,
And sing, enamoured of the nut-brown maid;
The moonlight revel of the fairy glade;
Or hags, that suckle an infernal brood,
And ply in caves the' unutterable trade,*
Midst fiends and sceptres, queench the moon in blood,
Yell in the midnight storm, or ride the infuriate flood.

XLV.

But when to horror his amazement rose,
A gentler strain the Beldam would rehearse,
A tale of rural life, a tale of woes,
The orphan-babes,* and guardian-uncle fierce:—
O cruel! will no pang of pity pierce
That heart, by lust of lucre seared to stone!
For sure, if aught of virtue last, or verse,
To latest times shall tender souls bemoan
Those helpless orphan-babes, by thy fell arts undone.

XLVI.

Behold, with berries smeared, with brambles torn,*
The babes, now famished, lay them down to die,
Midst the wild howl of darksome woods forlorn,
Folded in one another's arms they lie;
Nor friend, nor stranger, hears their dying cry;
"For from the town the man returns no more."
But thou, who Heaven's just vengeance dar'st defy,
This deed with fruitless tears shall soon deplore,
When Death lays waste thy house, and flames consume thy store.

XLVII.

A stifled smile of stern vindictive joy
Brightened one moment Edwin's startling tear.—
"But why should gold man's feeble mind decoy
And Innocence thus die by doom severe?"
O Edwin! while thy heart is yet sincere,
The' assaults of discontent and doubt repel:
Dark, e'en at noontide, is our mortal sphere;
But let us hope;——to doubt, is to rebel;——
Let us exult in hope, that all shall yet be well.

XLVIII.

Nor be thy generous indignation checked,
Nor checked the tender tear to Misery given:
From Guilt's contagious power shall that protect,
This soften and refine the soul for Heaven.
But dreadful is their doom, whom doubt has driven
To censure Fate, and pious Hope forego:
Like yonder blasted boughs by lightning riven,
Perfection, beauty, life, they never know,
But frown on all that pass, a monument of wo.

XLIX.

Shall he, whose birth, maturity, and age,
Scarce fill the circle of one summer day;
Shall the poor gnat with discontent and rage
Exclaim, that "Nature hastens to decay;"
If but a cloud obstruct the solar ray,
If but a momentary shower descend?
Or shall frail man Heaven's dread decree gain say,
Which bade the series of events extend,
Wide through unnumbered worlds, and ages without end?

* Allusion to Shakspeare: "A deed without a name." *Macbeth, Act 4, Scene 1.*

* See the fine old ballad, called "the Children in the Wood."

L.

One part, one little part, we dimly scan
Through the dark medium of life's feverish dream;
Yet dare arraign the whole stupendous plan,
If but that little part incongruous seem.
Nor is that part, perhaps, what mortals deem;
Oft from apparent ill our blessings rise.
O, then renounce that impious self-esteem,
That aims to trace the secrets of the skies:
For thou art but of dust; be humble and be wise!

LI.

Thus Heaven enlarged his soul in riper years.
For Nature gave him strength and fire, to soar
On Fancy's wing above this vale of tears;
Where dark cold-hearted sceptics, creeping, pore
Through microscope of metaphysic lore:
And much they grope for truth, but never hit.
For why? their powers, inadequate before,
This art preposterous renders more unfit;
Yet deem they darkness light, and their vain blunders wit.

LII.

Nor was this ancient dame a foe to mirth:
Her ballad, jest, and riddle's quaint device,
Oft cheered the shepherds round their social hearth;
Whom levity or spleen could ne'er entice
To purchase chat or laughter, at the price
Of decency. Nor let it faith exceed,
That Nature forms a rustic taste so nice:—
Ah! had they been of court or city breed,
Such delicacy were right marvellous indeed.

LIII.

Oft when the winter-storm had ceased to rave,
He roamed the snowy waste at even, to view
The cloud stupendous, from the Atlantic wave
High towering, sail along the horizon blue:
Where midst the changeful scenery, ever new,
Fancy a thousand wondrous forms descries
More wildly great than ever pencil drew,
Rocks, torrents, gulfs, and shapes of giant size,
And glittering cliffs on cliffs, and fiery ramparts rise.

LIV.

Thence musing onward to the sounding shore,
The lone enthusiast oft would take his way,
Listening with pleasing dread to the deep roar
Of the wide-weltering waves. In black array
When sulphurous clouds rolled on the vernal day,
Even then he hastened from the haunt of man,
Along the trembling wilderness to stray,
What time the lightning's fierce career began,
And o'er Heaven's rending arch the rattling thunder ran.

LV.

Responsive to the sprightly pipe, when all
In sprightly dance the village-youth were joined,
Edwin, of melody aye held in thrall,
From the rude gambol far remote reclined,
Soothed with the soft notes warbling in the wind.
Ah then, all jollity seemed noise and folly:
To the pure soul by Fancy's fire refined,
Ah, what is mirth but turbulence unholy,
When with the charm compared of heavenly melancholy!

LVI.

Is there a heart that music can not melt?
Alas! how is that rugged heart forlorn!
Is there, who ne'er those mystic transports felt
Of solitude and melancholy born?
He needs not woo the Muse; he is her scorn.
The sophist's rope of cobweb he shall twine;
Mope o'er the schoolman's peevish page; or mourn,
And delve for life in Mammon's dirty mine;
Sneak with the scoundrel fox, or grunt with glutton swine.

LVII.

For Edwin fate a nobler doom had planned;
Song was his favourite and first pursuit:
The wild harp rang to his advent'rous hand,
And languished to his breath the plaintive flute.
His infant muse, though artless, was not mute
Of elegance as yet he took no care;
For this of time and culture is the fruit;
And Edwin gained at last this fruit so rare
As in some future verse I purpose to declare.

LVIII.

Meanwhile, whate'er of beautiful or new,
Sublime or dreadful, in earth, sea, or sky,
By chance, or search, was offered to his view,
He scanned with curious and romantic eye.
Whate'er of lore tradition could supply
From gothic tale, or song, or fable old,
Roused him, still keen to listen and to pry.
At last, though long by Penury controlled,
And Solitude, his soul her graces 'gan unfold.

LIX.

Thus on the chill Lapponian's dreary land,
For many a long month lost in snow profound,
When Sol from Cancer sends the season bland,
And in their northern cave the Storms are bound;
From silent mountains, straight, with startling sound,
Torrents are hurled; green hills emerge; and lo,
The trees with foliage, cliffs with flowers are crowned;

Pure rills through vales of verdure warbling go;
And wonder, love, and joy, the peasant's heart
o'erflow.*

LX.

Here pause, my gothic lyre, a little while;
The leisure hour is all that thou canst claim:
But if Arbuthnott† on this labour smile,
New strains ere long shall animate thy frame,
And his applause to me is more than fame;
For still with truth accords his taste refined.
At lucre or renown let others aim,
I only wish to please the gentle mind,
Whom Nature's charms inspire, and love of human-kind.

BOOK II.

Doctrina sed vim promovet insitam,
Rectique cultus pectora roborant. *Hor*

I.

Or chance or change O let not man complain;
Else shall he never never cease to wail:
For, from the imperial dome, to where the swain
Rears the lone cottage in the silent dale,
All feel the assault of fortune's fickle gale,
Art, empire, earth itself, to change are doomed;
Earthquakes have raised to heaven the humble vale,
And gulfs the mountain's mighty mass entombed,
And where the Atlantic rolls wide continents have bloomed.‡

II.

But sure to foreign climes we need not range,
Nor search the ancient records of our race,
To learn the dire effects of time and change,
Which in ourselves, alas! we daily trace.
Yet at the darkened eye, the withered face,
Or hoary hair, I never will repine:
But spare, O Time! whate'er of mental grace,
Of candour, love, or sympathy divine,
Whate'er of fancy's ray, or friendship's flame is mine.

III.

So I, obsequious to Truth's dread command,
Shall here without reluctance change my lay,
And smite the gothic lyre with harsher hand;
Now when I leave that flowery path for aye
Of childhood, where I sported many a day,
Warbling and sauntering carelessly along;
Where every face was innocent and gay,
Each vale romantic, tuneful every tongue,
Sweet, wild, and artless all, as Edwin's infant song.

IV.

"Perish the lore that deadens young desire,"*
Is the soft tenor of my song no more.
Edwin, though loved of Heaven, must not aspire
To bliss, which mortals never knew before.
On trembling wings let youthful fancy soar,
Nor always haunt the sunny realms of joy;
But now and then the shades of life explore;
Though many a sound and sight of wo annoy,
And many a qualm of care his rising hopes destroy.

V.

Vigour from toil, from trouble patience grows:
The weakly blossom, warm in summer-bower,
Some tints of transient beauty may disclose;
But ah! it withers in the chilling hour.
Mark, yonder oaks, superior to the power
Of all the warring winds of Heaven they rise,
And from the stormy promontory tower,
And toss their giant arms amid the skies,
While each assailing blast increase of strength supplies.

VI.

And now the downy cheek and deepened voice
Gave dignity to Edwin's blooming prime;
And walks of wider circuit were his choice,
And vales more wild, and mountains more sublime.
One evening, as he framed the careless rhyme,
It was his chance to wander far abroad,
And o'er a lonely eminence to climb,
Which heretofore his foot had never trode;
A vale appeared below, a deep retired abode.

VII.

Thither he hied, enamoured of the scene:
For rocks on rocks piled, as by magic spell,
Here scorched with lightning, there with ivy green
Fenced from the north and east this savage dell;
Southward, a mountain rose with easy swell,
Whose long long groves eternal murmur made;
And toward the western sun a streamlet fell,
Where, through the cliffs, the eye remote surveyed
Blue hills, and glittering waves, and skies in gold arrayed.

Spring and Autumn are hardly known to the Laplanders. About the time the sun enters Cancer, their fields, which a week before were covered with snow, appear on a sudden full of grass and flowers.—*Scheffer's History of Lapland, p.* 16.

† Robert Arbuthnot, Esq. a near relation of the celebrated Dr. Arbuthnot, and one of the most intimate associates of Dr. Beattie.

‡ See Plato's Timeus.

* See Book I. Stanza XXXI.

VIII.

Along this narrow valley you might see
The wild deer sporting on the meadow ground;
And, here and there, a solitary tree
Or mossy stone, or rock with woodbine crowned:
Oft did the cliffs reverberate the sound
Of parted fragments tumbling from on high;
And from the summit of that craggy mound
The perching eagle oft was heard to cry,
Or on resounding wings to shoot athwart the sky.

IX.

One cultivated spot there was, that spread
Its flowery bosom to the noonday beam,
Where many a rose-bud rears its blushing head,
And herbs for food with future plenty teem.
Soothed by the lulling sound of grove and stream
Romantic visions swarm on Edwin's soul:
He minded not the sun's last trembling gleam,
For heard from far the twilight curfew toll;
When slowly on his ear these moving accents stole:—

X.

"Hail, awful scenes, that calm the troubled breast,
And woo the weary to profound repose;
Can Passion's wildest uproar lay to rest,
And whisper comfort to the man of woes!
Here Innocence may wander, safe from foes,
And Contemplation soar on seraph-wings.
O Solitude! the man who thee foregoes,
When lucre lures him, or ambition stings,
Shall never know the source whence real grandeur springs.

XI.

"Vain man, is grandeur given to gay attire?
Then let the butterfly thy pride upbraid:—
To friends, attendants, armies, bought with hire?
It is thy weakness that requires their aid:—
To palaces, with gold and gems inlaid?
They fear the thief, and tremble in the storm:—
To hosts, through carnage who to conquest wade?
Behold the victor vanquished by the worm!
Behold, what deeds of wo the locust can perform!

XII.

"True dignity is his, whose tranquil mind
Virtue has raised above the things below,
Who, every hope and fear to Heaven resigned,
Shrinks not, though Fortune aim her deadliest blow."
—This strain from midst the rocks was heard to flow
In solemn sounds. Now beamed the evening star;
And from embattled clouds emerging slow,
Cynthia came riding on her silver car;
And hoary mountain-cliffs shone faintly from afar.

XIII.

Soon did the solemn voice its theme renew;
(While Edwin, wrapt in wonder, listening stood)
"Ye tools and toys of tyranny, adieu,
Scorned by the wise, and hated by the good!
Ye only can engage the servile brood
Of Levity and Lust, who, all their days,
Ashamed of truth and liberty, have woo'd,
And hugged the chain, that glittering on their gaze
Seems to outshine the pomp of Heaven's empyreal blaze.

XIV.

"Like them, abandoned to Ambition's sway,
I sought for glory in the paths of guile;
And fawned and smiled, to plunder and betray,
Myself betrayed and plundered all the while;
So gnawed the viper the corroding file:
But now with pangs of keen remorse I rue
Those years of trouble and debasement vile:—
Yet why should I this cruel theme pursue?
Fly, fly, detested thoughts for ever from my view.

XV.

"The gusts of appetite, the clouds of care,
And storms of disappointment, all o'erpast;
Henceforth no earthly hope with Heaven shall share
This heart, where peace serenely shines at last.
And if for me no treasure be amassed,
And if no future age shall hear my name,
I lurk the more secure from Fortune's blast,
And with more leisure feed this pious flame,
Whose rapture far transcends the fairest hopes of fame.

XVI.

"The end and the reward of toil is rest.
Be all my prayer for virtue and for peace!
Of wealth and fame, of pomp and power possessed,
Who ever felt his weight of wo decrease?
Ah! what avails the lore of Rome or Greece,
The lay heaven-prompted, and harmonious string,
The dust of Ophir, or the Tyrian fleece,
All that art, fortune, enterprise, can bring,
If envy, scorn, remorse, or pride, the bosom wring!

XVII.

"Let Vanity adorn the marble tomb
With trophies, rhymes, and scutcheons of renown,
In the deep dungeon of some gothic dome,
Where night and desolation ever frown.
Mine be the breezy hill that skirts the down;
Where the green grassy turf is all I crave,
With here and there a violet bestrown,
Fast by a brook, or fountain's murmuring wave;
And many an evening sun shine sweetly on my grave.

XVIII.

"And thither let the village swain repair;
And, light of heart, the village maiden gay,
To deck with flowers her half-disheveled hair,
And celebrate the merry morn of May.
There let the shepherd's pipe the live-long day
Fill all the grove with love's bewitching wo;
And when mild Evening comes with mantle gray,
Let not the blooming band make haste to go,
No ghost nor spell my long and last abode shall know.

XIX.

"For though I fly to 'scape from Fortune's rage,
And bear the scars of envy, spite, and scorn;
Yet with mankind no horrid war I wage,
Yet with no impious spleen my breast is torn:
For virtue lost, and ruined man, I mourn.
O man! Creation's pride, Heaven's darling child,
Whom Nature's best, divinest gifts adorn,
Why from thy home are truth and joy exiled,
And all thy favourite haunts with blood and tears defiled?

XX.

"Along yon glittering sky what glory streams!
What majesty attends night's lovely queen!
Fair laugh our valleys in the vernal beams;
And mountains rise, and oceans roll between,
And all conspire to beautify the scene:
But, in the mental world what chaos drear!
What forms of mournful, loathsome, furious mien!
O when shall that Eternal Morn appear,
These dreadful forms to chase, this chaos dark to clear?

XXI.

"O Thou, at whose creative smile, yon heaven,
In all the pomp of beauty, life, and light,
Rose from the' abyss: when dark Confusion, driven
Down down the bottomless profound of night,
Fled, where he ever flies thy piercing sight!
O glance on these sad shades one pitying ray
To blast the fury of oppressive might,
Melt the hard heart to Love and Mercy's sway,
And cheer the wandering soul, and light him on the way!"

XXII.

Silence ensued: and Edwin raised his eyes
In tears, for grief lay heavy at his heart:
"And is it thus in courtly life, (he cries)
That man to man acts a betrayer's part?
And dares he thus the gifts of Heaven pervert,
Each social instinct, and sublime desire?—
Hail, Poverty! if honour, wealth, and art,
If what the great pursue, and learned admire,
Thus dissipate and quench the soul's ethereal fire!"

XXIII.

He said, and turned away; nor did the Sage
O'erhear, in silent orisons employed.
The Youth, his rising sorrow to assuage,
Home as he hied, the evening scene enjoyed:
For now no cloud obscures the starry void;
The yellow moonlight sleeps on all the hills;
Nor is the mind with startling sounds annoyed,
A soothing murmur the lone region fills
Of groves, and dying gales, and melancholy rills.

XXIV.

But he from day to day more anxious grew:—
The voice still seemed to vibrate on his ear,
Nor durst he hope the hermit's tale untrue;
For Man he seemed to love, and Heaven to fear,
And none speaks false, where there is none to hear.
"Yet, can man's gentle heart become so fell?
No more in vain conjecture let me wear
My hours away, but seek the hermit's cell;
'Tis he my doubt can clear, perhaps my care dispel."

XXV.

At early dawn the Youth his journey took,
And many a mountain passed and valley wide,
Then reached the wild; where in a flowery nook,
And seated on a mossy stone, he spied
An ancient man: his harp lay him beside:
A stag sprang from the pasture at his call,
And, kneeling, licked the withered hand that tied
A wreath of woodbine round his antlers tall,
And hung his lofty neck with many a floweret small.

XXVI.

And now the hoary Sage arose, and saw
The wanderer approaching: innocence
Smiled on his glowing cheek, but modest awe
Depressed his eye, that feared to give offence:

"Who art thou, courteous stranger? and from whence?
Why roam thy steps to this abandoned dale?"
"A shepherd boy (the Youth replied) far hence
My habitation; hear my artless tale;
Nor levity nor falsehood shall thine ear assail.

XXVII.

"Late as I roamed, intent on nature's charms,
I reached at eve this wilderness profound;
And leaning where yon oak expands her arms,
Heard these rude cliffs thine awful voice rebound,
(For in thy speech I recognise the sound:)
You mourned for ruined man, and virtue lost,
And seemed to feel of keen remorse the wound,
Pondering on former days, by guilt engrossed,
Or in the giddy storm of dissipation tossed.

XXVIII.

"But say, in courtly life can craft be learned,
Where knowledge opens, and exalts the soul?
Where fortune lavishes her gifts unearned,
Can selfishness the liberal heart control?
Is glory there achieved by arts, as foul
As those which felons, fiends, and furies plan?
Spiders ensnare, snakes poison, tigers prowl;
Love is the godlike attribute of man:
O teach a simple Youth this mystery to scan!

XXIX.

"Or else the lamentable strain disclaim,
And give me back the calm, contented mind;
Which, late, exulting, viewed in Nature's frame,
Goodness untainted, wisdom unconfined,
Grace, grandeur, and utility combined;
Restore those tranquil days, that saw me still
Well pleased with all, but most with humankind,
When Fancy roamed through Nature's works at will,"
Unchecked by cold distrust, and uninformed of ill."

XXX.

"Wouldst thou (the Sage replied) in peace return
To the gay dreams of fond romantic youth,
Leave me to hide, in this remote sojourn,
From every gentle ear the dreadful truth:
For if my desultory strain with ruth
And indignation make thine eyes o'erflow,
Alas! what comfort could thy anguish sooth,
Shouldst thou the extent of human folly know.
Be ignorance thy choice, where knowledge leads to wo.

XXXI.

"But let untender thoughts afar be driven;
Nor venture to arraign the dread decree:
For know, to man, as candidate for Heaven,
The voice of the Eternal said, *be free;*
And this divine prerogative to thee
Does Virtue, Happiness, and Heaven convey,
Nor Virtue is the child of Liberty,
And Happiness of Virtue; nor can they
Be free to keep the path who are not free to stray.

XXXII.

"Yet leave me not. I would allay that grief,
Which else might thy young virtue overpower;
And in thy converse I shall find relief,
When the dark shades of melancholy lour;
For solitude has many a dreary hour,
Ev'n when exempt from grief, remorse and pain.
Come often then; for, haply, in my bower,
Amusement, knowledge, wisdom thou may'st gain.
If I one soul improve, I have not lived in vain."

XXXIII.

And now, at length to Edwin's ardent gaze
The Muse of history unrolls her page:
But few, alas! the scenes her art displays,
To charm his fancy, or his heart engage.
Here Chiefs their thirst of power in blood assuage,
And straight their flames with tenfold fierceness burn;
Here smiling Virtue prompts the patriot's rage,
But lo, ere long, is left alone to mourn,
And languish in the dust, and class the abandoned urn.

XXXIV.

"Ah, what avails (he said) to trace the springs
That whirl of empire the stupendous wheel!
Ah, what have I to do with conquering kings,
Hands drenched in blood, and breasts begirt with steel?
To those whom Nature taught to think and feel,
Heroes, alas! are things of small concern:
Could History man's secret heart reveal,
And what imports a heaven-born mind to learn,
Her transcripts to explore what bosom would not yearn!

XXXV.

"This praise, O Cheronean Sage,* is thine.
(Why should this praise to thee alone belong?)
All else from Nature's moral path decline,
Lured by the toys that captivate the throng,
To herd in cabinets and camps, among
Spoil, carnage, and the cruel pomp of pride;
Or chaunt of heraldry the drowsy song,
How tyrant blood, o'er many a region wide,
Rolls to a thousand thrones its execrable tide.

* Plutarch.

XXXVI

"Oh, who of man the story will unfold,
Ere victory and empire wrought annoy,
In that elysian age (misnamed of gold)
The age of love, and innocence, and joy,
When all were great and free! man's sole employ
To deck the bosom of his parent earth;
Or toward his bower the murmuring stream decoy,
To aid the floweret's long-expected birth,
And lull the bed of peace, and crown the board of mirth.

XXXVII.

"Sweet were your shades, O ye primeval groves,
Whose boughs to man his food and shelter lent,
Pure in his pleasures, happy in his loves,
His eye still smiling, and his heart content:
Then, hand in hand, Health, Sport, and Labour went;
Nature supplied the wish she taught to crave;
None prowled for prey, none watched to circumvent:
To all an equal lot Heaven's bounty gave;
No vassal feared his lord, no tyrant feared his slave.

XXXVIII.

"But ah! th' historic Muse has never dared
To pierce those hallowed bowers: 'tis Fancy's beam
Poured on the vision of th' enraptured Bard,
That paints the charms of that delicious theme.
Then hail, sweet Fancy's ray! and hail the dream
That weans the weary soul from guilt and wo!
Careless what others of my choice may deem,
I long where Love and Fancy lead to go,
And meditate on Heaven; enough of earth I know."—

XXXIX.

"I can not blame thy choice, (the Sage replied)
For soft and smooth are Fancy's flowery ways:
And yet, e'en there, if left without a guide,
The young adventurer unsafely plays.
Eyes dazzled long by Fiction's gaudy rays,
In modest Truth no light nor beauty find:
And who, my child, would trust the meteor-blaze,
That soon must fail, and leave the wanderer blind,
More dark and helpless far, than if it ne'er had shined?

XL.

"Fancy enervates, while it sooths, the heart,
And, while it dazzles, wounds the mental sight:
To joy each heightening charm it can impart,
But wraps the hour of wo in tenfold night.
And often, when no real ills affright,
Its visionary fiends, an endless train,
Assail with equal or superior might,
And through the throbbing heart, and dizzy brain,
And shivering nerves, shoot stings of more than mortal pain.

XLI.

"And yet, alas! the real ills of life
Claim the full vigour of a mind prepared,
Prepared for patient, long, laborious strife,
Its guide Experience, and Truth its guard.
We fare on earth as other men have fared:
Were they successful? Let not us despair.
Was disappointment oft their sole reward?
Yet shall their tale instruct, if it declare
How they have borne the load ourselves are doomed to bear.

XLII.

"What charms th' historic Muse adorn, from spoils,
And blood, and tyrants, when she wings her flight,
To hail the patriot Prince, whose pious toils
Sacred to science, liberty, and right,
And peace, through every age divinely bright,
Shall shine the boast and wonder of mankind!
Sees yonder sun, from his meridian height,
A lovelier scene than Virtue thus enshrined
In power, and man with man for mutual aid combined?

XLIII.

"Hail, sacred Polity, by Freedom reared!
Hail, sacred Freedom, when by Law restrained!
Without you, what were man? A groveling herd
In darkness, wretchedness, and want enchained.
Sublimed by you, the Greek and Roman reigned
In arts unrivalled: Oh, to latest days,
In Albion may your influence, unprofaned,
To godlike worth the generous bosom raise;
And prompt the Sage's lore, and fire the Poet's lays!

XLIV.

"But now let other themes our care engage.
For lo, with modest yet majestic grace,
To curb Imagination's lawless rage,
And from within the cherished heart to brace,
Philosophy appears. The gloomy race
By Indolence and moping Fancy bred,
Fear, Discontent, Solicitude give place,
And Hope and Courage brighten in their stead,
While on the kindling soul her vital beams are shed.

XLV.

"Then waken from long lethargy to life*
The seeds of happiness, and powers of thought;
Then jarring appetites forego their strife,
A strife by ignorance to madness wrought.
Pleasure by savage man is dearly bought
With fell revenge, lust that defies control,
With gluttony and death. The mind untaught
Is a dark waste, where fiends and tempests howl:
As Phœbus to the world, is Science to the soul.

XLIV.

"And Reason now through Number, Time, and Space,
Darts the keen lustre of her serious eye,
And learns from facts compared, the laws to trace,
Whose long progression leads to Deity.
Can mortal strength presume to soar so high?
Can mortal sight, so oft bedimmed with tears,
Such glory bear?—for lo, the shadows fly
From Nature's face; Confusion disappears,
And order charms the eyes, and harmony the ears.

XLVII.

"In the deep windings of the grove, no more
The hag obscene, and grisly phantom dwell;
Nor in the fall of mountain-stream, or roar
Of winds, is heard the angry spirit's yell;
No wizard mutters the tremendous spell,
Nor sinks convulsive in prophetic swoon;
Nor bids the noise of drums and trumpets swell,
To ease of fancied pangs the labouring moon,
Or chase the shade that blots the blazing orb of noon.

XLVIII.

"Many a long-lingering year, in lonely isle,
Stun'd with th' eternal turbulence of waves,
Lo, with dim eyes, that never learned to smile,
And trembling hands, the famished native craves
Of Heaven his wretched fare: shivering in caves,
Or scorched on rocks, he pines from day to day;
But Science gives the word; and lo, he braves
The surge and tempest, lighted by her ray,
And to a happier land wafts merrily away.

XLIX.

"And e'en where Nature loads the teeming plain
With the full pomp of vegetable store,
Her bounty, unimproved, is deadly bane:
Dark woods and rankling wilds, from shore to shore
Stretch their enormous gloom; which to explore
E'en Fancy trembles in her sprightliest mood;
For there each eyeball gleams with lust of gore,
Nestles each murderous and each monstrous brood,
Plague lurks in every shade, and steams from every flood.

L.

"'Twas from Philosophy man learned to tame
The soil by plenty to intemperance fed.
Lo, from the echoing axe, and thundering flame,
Poison and plague and yelling rage are fled:
The waters, bursting from their slimy bed,
Bring health and melody to every vale:
And, from the breezy main, and mountain's head,
Ceres and Flora, to the sunny dale,
To fan their glowing charms, invite the fluttering gale.

LI.

"What dire necessities on every hand
Our art, our strength, our fortitude require!
Of foes intestine with a numerous band
Against this little throb of life conspire!
Yet Science can elude their fatal ire
Awhile, and turn aside Death's leveled dart,
Sooth the sharp pang, allay the fever's fire,
And brace the nerves once more, and cheer the heart,
And yet a few soft nights and balmy days impart.

LII.

"Nor less to regulate man's moral frame
Science exerts her all-composing sway.
Flutters thy breast with fear, or pants for fame,
Or pines to Indolence and Spleen a prey,
Or Avarice, a fiend more fierce than they?
Flee to the shade of Academus' grove;
Where cares molest not, discord melts away
In harmony, and the pure passions prove
How sweet the words of truth breathed from the lips of Love.

LIII.

"What can not Art and Industry perform,
When Science plans the progress of their toil?
They smile at penury, disease, and storm;
And oceans from their mighty mounds recoil.
When tyrants scourge, or demagogues embroil
A land, or when the rabble's headlong rage
Order transforms to anarchy and spoil,
Deep-versed in man the philosophic Sage
Prepares with lenient hand their frenzy to assuage

LIV.

"'Tis he alone, whose comprehensive mind,
From situation, temper, soil, and clime

* The influence of the philosophic Spirit, in humanizing the mind, and preparing it for intellectual exertion, and delicate pleasure;—in exploring, by the help of geometry, the system of the universe; in banishing superstition; in promoting navigation, agriculture, medicine, and moral and political science: from Stanza XLV. to Stanza LV.

Explored, a nation's various powers can bind
And various orders, in one form sublime
Of polity, that, midst the wrecks of time,
Secure shall lift its head on high, nor fear
The assault of foreign or domestic crime,
While public faith, and public love sincere,
And Industry and Law maintain their ways severe."

LV.

Enraptured by the Hermit's strain, the Youth
Proceeds the path of Science to explore;
And now, expanding to the beams of Truth,
New energies, and charms unknown before,
His mind discloses: Fancy now no more
Wantons on fickle pinion through the skies;
But fixed in aim, and conscious of her power,
Sublime from cause to cause exults to rise,
Creation's blended stores arranging as she flies.

LVI.

Nor love of novelty alone inspires,
Their laws and nice dependencies to scan;
For mindful of the aids that life requires,
And of the services man owes to man,
He meditates new arts on Nature's plan;
The cold desponding breast of Sloth to warm,
The flame of Industry and Genius fan,
And Emulation's noble rage alarm,
And the long hours of Toil and Solitude to charm.

LVII.

But she, who set on fire his infant heart,
And all his dreams and all his wanderings shared
And blessed, the Muse and her celestial art,
Still claim the enthusiast's fond and first regard.
From Nature's beauties variously compared
And variously combined, he learns to frame
Those forms of bright perfection, which the Bard,
While boundless hopes and boundless views inflame,
Enamoured consecrates to never-dying fame.

LVIII.

Of late, with cumbersome, though pompous show,
Edwin would oft his flowery rhyme deface,
Through ardour to adorn; but Nature now
To his experienced eye a modest grace
Presents, where Ornament the second place
Holds, to intrinsic worth and just design
Subservient still. Simplicity apace
Tempers his rage: he owns her charm divine,
And clears the ambiguous phrase, and lops the unwieldy line.

LIX.

Fain would I sing (much yet unsung remains)
What sweet delirium o'er his bosom stole,
When the great Shepherd of the Mantuan plains*
His deep majestic melody 'gan roll:
Fain would I sing, what transport stormed his soul,
How the red current throbbed his veins along,
When, like Pelides, bold beyond control,
Gracefully terrible, sublimely strong,
Homer raised high to heaven, the loud, the impetuous song.

LX.

And how his lyre, though rude her first essays,
Now skilled to sooth, to triumph, to complain,
Warbling at will through each harmonious maze,
Was taught to modulate the artful strain,
I fain would sing:—but ah! I strive in vain.
Sighs from a breaking heart my voice confound.
With trembling step, to join yon weeping train
I haste, where gleams funereal glare around,
And, mixed with shrieks of wo, the knells of death resound.

LXI.

Adieu, ye lays that Fancy's flowers adorn,
The soft amusement of the vacant mind!
He sleeps in dust, and all the Muses mourn.
He, whom each Virtue fired, each Grace refined,
Friend, teacher, pattern, darling of mankind!—
He sleeps in dust.—Ah, how should I pursue
My theme?—To heart-consuming grief resigned,
Here on his recent grave I fix my view,
And pour my bitter tears.—Ye flowery lays, adieu!

LXII.

Art thou, my Gregory,† for ever fled?
And am I left to unavailing wo?
When fortune's storms assail this weary head,
Where cares long since have shed untimely snow,
Ah, now for comfort whither shall I go?
No more thy soothing voice my anguish cheers;
Thy placid eyes with smiles no longer glow,
My hopes to cherish, and allay my fears.—
'Tis meet that I should mourn:—flow forth afresh, my tears!

* Virgil.

† This excellent person died suddenly, on the 10th of February, 1773. The conclusion of the poem was written a few days after. Dr. Gregory, who is here lamented, has made his memory beloved by almost every class of readers from his beautiful and affecting address to his daughters, published after his death, with the title of "A Father's Legacy." He published in his life-time "A comparative View of the State and Faculties of Man, with those of the Animal World;" and "Lectures on the Duties and Offices of a Physician." He was Professor of Medicine in the University of Aberdeen, and afterwards of Edinburgh, held the medical rank of first physician to his Majesty for Scotland, and arrived at high eminence in the practice of his profession. See a further and very interesting account of him in Sir W. Forbes' Life of Dr. Beattie.

Poems on Several Occasions.

RETIREMENT.

AN ODE.

When in the crimson cloud of Even
The lingering light decays,
And Hesper on the front of heaven
His glittering gem displays;
Deep in the silent vale unseen,
Beside a lulling stream,
A pensive Youth, of placid mien,
Indulged this tender theme.

"Ye cliffs, in hoary grandeur piled
High o'er the glimmering dale;
Ye woods, along whose windings wild
Murmurs the solemn gale;
Where Melancholy strays forlorn,
And Wo retires to weep,
What time the wan moon's yellow horn
Gleams on the western deep:

"To you, ye wastes, whose artless charms
Ne'er drew Abition's eye,
'Scaped a tumultuous world's alarms,
To your retreats I fly:
Deep in your most sequestered bower
Let me at last recline,
Where Solitude, mild, modest power!
Leans on her ivied shrine.

"How shall I woo thee, matchless Fair!
Thy heavenly smile how win?
Thy smile, that smooths the brow of Care,
And stills the storm within.
O wilt thou to thy favourite grove
Thine ardent votary bring,
And bless his hours, and bid them move
Serene, on silent wing?

"Oft let remembrance sooth his mind
With dreams of former days,
When, in the lap of Peace reclined,
He framed his infant lays;
When Fancy roved at large, nor Care
Nor cold Distrust alarmed;
Nor Envy, with malignant glare,
His simple youth had harmed.

"'Twas then, O Solitude! to thee
His early vows were paid,
From heart sincere, and warm, and free,
Devoted to the shade.

Ah, why did Fate his steps decoy
In stormy paths to roam,
Remote from all congenial joy?—
O take the Wanderer home.

"Thy shades, thy silence, now be mine,
Thy charms my only theme;
My haunt the hollow cliff, whose pine
Waves o'er the gloomy stream,
Whence the scared owl on pinions gray
Breaks from the rustling boughs,
And down the lone vale sails away
To more profound repose.

"O while to thee the woodland pours
Its wildly warbling song,
And balmy from the bank of flowers
The zephyr breathes along;
Let no rude sound invade from far,
No vagrant foot be nigh,
No ray from Grandeur's gilded car
Flash on the startled eye.

"But if some pilgrim through the glade
Thy hallowed bowers explore,
O guard from harm his hoary head,
And listen to his lore;
For he of joys divine shall tell
That wean from earthly wo,
And triumph o'er the mighty spell
That chains this heart below.

"For me no more the path invites
Ambition loves to tread;
No more I climb those toilsome heights
By guileful Hope misled;
Leaps my fond flattering heart no more
To Mirth's enlivening strain;
For present pleasure soon is o'er,
And all the past in vain."

ODE TO HOPE,

I. 1.

O thou, who glad'st the pensive soul,
More than Aurora's smiles the swain forlorn,
Left all night long to mourn
Where desolation frowns, and tempests howl,
And shrieks of wo, as intermits the storm,
Far o'er the monstrous wilderness resound,
And cross the gloom darts many a shapeless form
And many a fire-eyed visage glares around,

O come, and be once more my guest:
Come, for thou oft thy suppliant's vow hast heard,
And oft with smiles indulgent cheered
And soothed him into rest.

I. 2.

Smit by thy rapture-beaming eye
Deep flashing through the midnight of their mind,
The sable bands combined,
Where Fear's black banner bloats the troubled sky,
Appalled retire. Suspicion hides her head,
Nor dares th' obliquely gleaming eyeball raise;
Despair, with gorgon-figured veil o'erspread,
Speeds to dark Phlegethon's detested maze.
Lo, startled at the heavenly ray,
With speed unwonted Indolence upsprings
And, heaving, lifts her leaden wings,
And sullen glides away:

I. 3.

Ten thousand forms, by pining fancy viewed,
Dissolve.—Above the sparkling flood
When Phœbus rears his awful brow,
From lengthening lawn and valley low,
The troops of fen-born mists retire.
Along the plain
The joyous swain
Eyes the gay villages again,
And gold-illumined spire;
While on the billowy ether borne
Floats the loose lay's jovial measure;
And light along the fairy Pleasure,
Her green robes glittering to the morn,
Wantons on silken wing. And goblins all
To the damp dungeon shrink, or hoary hall,
Or westward, with impetuous flight,
Shoot to the desert realms of their congenial Night.

II. 1.

When first on Childhood's eager gaze
Life's varied landscape, stretched immense around,
Starts out of night profound,
Thy voice incites to tempt th' untrodden maze.
Fond he surveys thy mild maternal face,
His bashful eye still kindling as he views,
And, while thy lenient arm supports his pace,
With beating heart the upland path pursues:
The path that leads, where hung sublime,
And seen afar, youth's gallant trophies, bright
In Fancy's rainbow-ray, invite
His wingy nerves to climb.

II. 2.

Pursue thy pleasurable way,
Safe in the guidance of thy heavenly guard,
While melting airs are heard,
And soft-eyed cherub forms around thee play:
Simplicity, in careless flowers arrayed,
Prattling amusive in his accent meek;
And Modesty, half turning, as afraid,
The smile just dimpling on his glowing cheek!
Content and Leisure hand in hand
With Innocence and Peace, advance and sing;
And Mirth, in many a mazy ring,
Frisks o'er the flowery land.

II. 3.

Frail man, how various is thy lot below!
To-day though gales propitious blow,
And Peace, soft gliding down the sky,
Lead Love along and Harmony,
To-morrow the gay scene deforms:
Then all around
The thunder's sound
Rolls rattling on through heaven's profound,
And down rush all the storms.
Ye days, that balmy influence shed,
When sweet Childhood, ever sprightly,
In paths of pleasure sported lightly,
Whither, ah whither are ye fled?
Ye cherub-train, that brought him on his way,
O leave him not midst tumult and dismay;
For now youth's eminence he gains:
But what a weary length of lingering toil remains

III. 1.

They shrink, they vanish into air.
Now Slander taints with pestilence the gale;
And mingling cries assail,
The wail of Wo, and groan of dim Despair.
Lo, wizard Envy from his serpent eye
Darts quick destruction in each baleful glance
Pride smiling stern, and yellow Jealousy,
Frowning Disdain, and haggard Hate advance:
Behold, amidst the dire array,
Pale withered Care his giant stature rears,
And lo, his iron hand prepares
To grasp its feeble prey.

III. 2.

Who now will guard bewildered youth
Safe from the fierce assault of hostile rage?
Such war can Virtue wage,
Virtue, that bears the sacred shield of Truth!
Alas! full oft on Guilt's victorious car
The spoils of Virtue are in triumph borne;
While the fair captive, marked with many a scar,
In lone obscurity, oppressed, forlorn,
Resigns to tears her angel form.
Ill-fated youth, then whither wilt thou fly?
No friend, no shelter now is nigh:
And onward rolls the storm.

III. 3.

But whence the sudden beam that shoots along?
Why shrink aghast the hostile throng?
Lo, from amidst Affliction's night,
Hope bursts all radiant on the sight:

Her words the troubled bosom sooth:—
"Why thus dismayed?
Though foes invade,
Hope ne'er is wanting to their aid,
Who tread the path of truth.
'Tis I, who smooth the rugged way,
I, who close the eyes of Sorrow,
And with glad visions of to-morrow
Repair the weary soul's decay.
When Death's cold touch thrills to the freezing heart,
Dreams of heaven's opening glories I impart,
Till the freed spirit springs on high
In rapture too severe for weak mortality."

ODE.

ON LORD HAY'S BIRTH-DAY.

A MUSE, unskilled in venal praise,
Unstained with flattery's art;
Who loves simplicity of lays
Breathed ardent from the heart;
While gratitude and joy inspire,
Resumes the long unpractised lyre,
To hail, O Hay, thy natal morn:
No gaudy wreath of flowers she weaves,
But twines with oak the laurel leaves,
Thy cradle to adorn.

For not on beds of gaudy flowers
Thine ancestors reclined,
Where Sloth dissolves, and Spleen devours
All energy of mind.
To hurl the dart, to ride the car,
To stem the deluges of war,
And snatch from fate a sinking land;
Trample the invader's lofty crest,
And from his grasp the dagger wrest,
And desolating brand:

'Twas this, that raised thy illustrious line
To match the first in fame!
A thousand years have seen it shine
With unabated flame;
Have seen thy mighty sires appear
Foremost in Glory's high career,
The pride and pattern of the brave:
Yet pure from lust of blood their fire,
And from Ambition's wild desire,
They triumphed but to save.

The Muse with joy attends their way
The vale of peace along;
There to its lord the village gay
Renews the grateful song.
Yon castle's glittering towers contain
No pit of wo, nor clanking chain,
Nor to the suppliant's wail resound;
The open doors the needy bless,
Th' unfriended hail their calm recess,
And gladness smiles around.

There to the sympathetic heart
Life's best delights belong,
To mitigate the mourner's smart,
To guard the weak from wrong.
Ye sons of Luxury be wise:
Know, happiness for ever flies
The cold and solitary breast;
Then let the social instinct glow,
And learn to feel another's wo,
And in his joy be blessed.

O yet, ere Pleasure plants her snare
For unsuspecting youth:
Ere Flattery her song prepare
To check the voice of Truth;
O may his country's guardian power
Attend the slumbering Infant's bower,
And bright inspiring dreams impart;
To rouse the hereditary fire,
To kindle each sublime desire,
Exalt and warm the heart.

Swift to reward a Parent's fears,
A Parent's hopes to crown,
Roll on in peace ye blooming years,
That rear him to renown;
When in his finished form and face
Admiring multitudes shall trace
Each patrimonial charm combined,
The courteous yet majestic mien,
The liberal smile, the look serene,
The great and gentle mind.

Yet, though thou draw a nation's eyes,
And win a nation's love;
Let not thy towering mind despise
The village and the grove.
No slander there shall wound thy fame,
No ruffian take his deadly aim,
No rival weave the secret snare:
For Innocence, with angel smile,
Simplicity, that knows no guile,
And Love and Peace are there.

When winds the mountain-oak assail,
And lay its glories waste;
Content may slumber in the vale,
Unconscious of the blast.
Through scenes of tumult while we roam
The heart, alas! is ne'er at home,
It hopes in time to roam no more;
The mariner, not vainly brave,
Combats the storm, and rides the wave,
To rest at last on shore.

Ye proud, ye selfish, ye severe,
How vain your mask of state!
The good alone have joy sincere,
The good alone are great;
Great, when amid the vale of peace
They bid the plaint of sorrow cease.

And hear the voice of artless praise;
As, when along the trophied plain
Sublime they lead the victor's train,
While shouting nations gaze.

PIGMÆO-GERANO-MACHIA:

THE BATTLE OF

THE PIGMIES AND CRANES,

[*From the Latin of Addison*, 1762.]

THE pigmy people, and the feathered train,
Mingling in mortal combat on the plain,
I sing. Ye muses favour my designs,
Lead on my squadrons, and arrange the lines;
The flashing swords and fluttering wings display,
And long bills nibbling in the bloody fray:
Cranes darting with disdain on tiny foes,
Conflicting birds and men, and war's unnumbered woes.

The wars and woes of heroes six feet long
Have oft resounded in Pierian song.
Who has not heard of Colchos' golden fleece,
And Argo manned with all the flower of Greece?
Of Thebes' fell brethren, Theseus stern of face,
And Peleus' son unrivaled in the race,
Æneas founder of the Roman line,
And William glorious on the banks of Boyne?
Who has not learned to weep at Pompey's woes,
And over Blackmore's epic page to doze?
'Tis I, who dare attempt unusual strains,
Of hosts unsung, and unfrequented plains;
Of small shrill trump, and chiefs of little size,
And armies rushing down the darkened skies.

Where India reddens to the early dawn,
Winds a deep vale from vulgar eye withdrawn:
Bosomed in groves the lowly region lies,
And rocky mountains round the border rise.
Here, till the doom of Fate its fall decreed,
The empire flourished of the pigmy-breed;
Here Industry performed, and Genius planned,
And busy multitudes o'erspread the land.
But now to these lone bounds if pilgrim stray,
Tempting through craggy cliffs the desperate way,
He finds the puny mansion fallen to earth,
Its godlings mouldering on the abandoned hearth;
And starts, where small white bones are spread around,
"Or little footsteps lightly print the ground;"
While the proud crane her nest securely builds,
Chattering amid the desolated fields.

But different fates befel her hostile rage,
While reigned, invincible through many an age,
The dreaded pigmy: roused by war's alarms
Forth rushed the madding mannikin to arms.
Fierce to the field of death the hero flies;
The faint crane fluttering flaps the ground, and dies:
And by the victor borne (o'erwhelming load!)
With bloody bill loose dangling marks the road:
And oft the wily dwarf in ambush lay,
And often made the callow young his prey;
With slaughtered victims heaped his board, and smiled
To avenge the parent's trespass on the child.
Oft, where his feathered foe had reared her nest,
And laid her eggs and household gods to rest,
Burning for blood, in terrible array,
The eighteen-inch militia burst their way;
All went to wreck; the infant foemen fell,
When scarce his chirping bill had broke the shell
Loud uproar hence, and rage of arms arose,
And the fell rancour of encountering foes;
Hence dwarfs and cranes one general havoc whelms,
And Death's grim visage scares the pigmy realms.
Not half so furious blazed the warlike fire
Of Mice, high theme of the Mæonian lyre;
When bold to battle marched th' accoutred frogs,
And the deep tumult thundered through the bogs.
Pierced by the javelin-bulrush, on the shore
Here agonizing rolled the mouse in gore;
And there the frog (a scene full sad to see!)
Shorn of one leg, slow sprawled along on three;
He vaults no more with vigorous hopes on high,
But mourns in coarsest croaks his destiny.

And now the day of wo drew on apace,
A day of wo to all the pigmy race,
When dwarfs were doomed (but penitence was vain)
To rue each broken egg, and chicken slain.
For roused to vengeance by repeated wrong,
From distant climes the long-billed regions throng:
From Strymon's lake, and Cayster's plashy meads,
And fens of Scythia, green with rustling reeds;
From where the Danube winds through many a land,
And Mareotis laves th' Egyptian strand,
To rendezvous they waft on eager wing,
And wait assembled the returning Spring.
Meanwhile they trim their plumes for length of flight,
Whet their keen beaks, and twisting claws, for fight;
Each crane the pigmy power in thought o'erturns,
And every bosom for the battle burns.

When genial gales the frozen air unbind,
The screaming legions wheel, and mount the wind.
Far in the sky they form their long array,
And land and ocean stretched immense survey
Deep, deep beneath; and, triumphing in pride,
With clouds and winds commixed, innumerous ride;
'Tis wild obstreperous clangor all, and heaven
Whirls, in tempestuous undulation driven.

Nor less th' alarm that shook the world below,
Where marched in pomp of war th' embattled foe

Where mannikins with haughty step advance,
And grasp the shield, and couch the quivering lance;
To right and left the lengthening lines they form,
And ranked in deep array await the storm.
High in the midst the chieftain dwarf was seen,
Of giant stature, and imperial mien.
Full twenty inches tall he strode along,
And viewed with lofty eye the wondering throng;
And, while with many a scar his visage frowned,
Bared his broad bosom, rough with many a wound
Of beaks and claws, disclosing to their sight
The glorious meed of high heroic might.
For with insatiate vengeance he pursued,
And never-ending hate, the feathery brood.
Unhappy they, confiding in the length
Of horny beak, or talons' crooked strength,
Who durst abide his rage; the blade descends,
And from the panting trunk the pinion rends:
Laid low in dust the pinion waves no more,
The trunk, disfigured, stiffens in its gore.
What hosts of heroes fell beneath his force!
What heaps of chicken carnage marked his course!
How oft, O Strymon, thy lone banks along,
Did wailing echo waft the funeral song!
And now from far the mingling clamours rise,
Loud and more loud rebounding through the skies.
From skirt to skirt of heaven, with stormy sway,
A cloud rolls on, and darkens all the day.
Near and more near descends the dreadful shade,
And now in battailous array displayed,
On sounding wings, and screaming in their ire,
The cranes rush onward, and the fight require.
The pigmy warriors eye, with fearless glare,
The host thick swarming o'er the burthened air;
Thick swarming now, but to their native land
Doomed to return a scanty straggling band.——
When sudden, darting down the depth of heaven,
Fierce on th' expecting foe the cranes were driven,
The kindling frenzy every bosom warms,
The region echoes to the clash of arms:
Loose feathers from th' encountering armies fly,
And in careering whirlwinds mount the sky.
To breathe from toil, upsprings the panting crane,
Then with fresh vigour downward darts again.
Success in equal balance hovering hangs.
Here, on the sharp spear, mad with mortal pangs,
The bird transfixed in bloody vortex whirls,
Yet fierce in death the threatening talon curls;
There, while the life-blood bubbles from his wound,
With little feet the pigmy beats the ground;
Deep from his breast the short short sob he draws,
And, dying, curses the keen-pointed claws.
Trembles the thundering field, thick covered o'er
With falchions, mangled wings, and streaming gore,
And pigmy arms, and beaks of ample size,
And here a claw, and there a finger lies.

Encompassed round with heaps of slaughtered foes,
All grim in blood the pigmy champion glows.
And on th' assailing host impetuous springs,
Careless of nibbling bills, and flapping wings;
And midst the tumult wheresoe'er he turns,
The battle with redoubled fury burns;
From every side th' avenging cranes amain
Throng, to o'erwhelm this terror of the plain.
When suddenly (for such the will of Jove)
A fowl enormous, sousing from above,
The gallant chieftain clutched, and, soaring high,
(Sad chance of battle!) bore him up the sky.
The cranes pursue, and clustering in a ring,
Chatter triumphant round the captive-king.
But ah! what pangs each pigmy bosom wrung,
When, now to cranes a prey, on talons hung,
High in the clouds they saw their helpless lord,
His wriggling form still lessening as he soared.
Lo, yet again with unabated rage
In mortal strife the mingling hosts engage.
The crane with darted bill assaults the foe,
Hovering, then wheels aloft to 'scape the blow:
The dwarf in anguish aims the vengeful wound;
But whirls in empty air the falchion round.
Such was the scene, when midst the loud alarms
Sublime th' eternal Thunderer rose in arms,
When Briareus, by mad ambition driven,
Heaved Pelion huge, and hurled it high at heaven:
Jove rolled redoubling thunders from on high,
Mountains and bolts encountered in the sky;
Till one stupendous ruin whelmed the crew,
Their vast limbs weltering wide in brimstone blue.
But now at length the pigmy legions yield,
And winged with terror fly the fatal field.
They raise a weak and melancholy wail,
All in distraction scattering o'er the vale.
Prone on their routed rear the cranes descend;
Their bills bite furious, and their talons rend:
With unrelenting ire they urge the chase,
Sworn to exterminate the hated race.
'Twas thus the pigmy name, once great in war
For spoils of conquered cranes renowned afar,
Perished. For, by the dread decree of heaven,
Short is the date to earthly grandeur given;
And vain are all attempts to roam beyond
Where Fate has fixed the everlasting bound.
Fallen are the trophies of Assyrian power,
And Persia's proud dominion is no more;
Yea, though to both superior far in fame,
Thine empire, Latium, is an empty name.
And now with lofty chiefs of ancient time
The pigmy heroes roam the Elysian clime.
Or, if belief to matron-tales be due,
Full oft, in the belated shepherd's view,
Their frisking forms, in gentle green arrayed,
Gambol secure amid the moonlight glade.
Secure, for no alarming cranes molest,
And all their woes in long oblivion rest.

Down the deep dale, and narrow winding way,
They foot it featly, ranged in ringlets gay:
'Tis joy and frolic all, where'er they rove,
And Fairy people is the name they love.

THE HARES.

A FABLE.

YES, yes, I grant the sons of earth
Are doomed to trouble from their birth.
We all of sorrow have our share;
But say, is yours without compare?
Look round the world; perhaps you'll find
Each individual of our kind
Pressed with an equal load of ill,
Equal at least:—Look further still,
And own your lamentable case
Is little short of happiness.
In yonder hut that stands alone
Attend to Famine's feeble moan;
Or view the couch where Sickness lies,
Mark his pale cheek, and languid eyes,
His frame by strong convulsion torn,
His struggling sighs, and looks forlorn.
Or see, transfixed with keener pangs,
Where o'er his hoard the miser hangs;
Whistles the wind; he starts, he stares,
Nor Slumber's balmy blessings shares;
Despair, Remorse, and Terror roll
Their tempests on his harassed soul.
But here perhaps it may avail
To' enforce our reasoning with a tale.
Mild was the morn, the sky serene,
The jolly hunting band convene;
The beagle's breast with ardour burns,
The bounding steed the champaign spurns
And Fancy oft the game descries
Through the hound's nose, and huntsman's eyes.
Just then, a council of the hares
Had met, on national affairs.
The chiefs were set; while o'er their head
The furze its frizzled covering spread.
Long lists of grievances were heard,
And general discontent appeared:
"Our harmless race shall every savage,
Both quadruped and biped, ravage?
Shall horses, hounds, and hunters still
Unite their wits, to work us ill?
The youth, his parent's sole delight,
Whose tooth the dewy lawns invite,
Whose pulse in every vein beats strong,
Whose limbs leap light the vales along,
May yet ere noontide meet his death,
And lie dismembered on the heath.
For youth, alas! nor cautious age,
Nor strength, nor speed, eludes their rage.
In every field we meet the foe,
Each gale comes fraught with sounds of wo;
The morning but awakes our fears,
The evening sees us bathed in tears,
But must we ever idly grieve,
Nor strive our fortunes to relieve?
Small is each individual's force:
To stratagem be our recourse;
And then, from all our tribes combined,
The murderer to his cost may find
No foes are weak, whom Justice arms,
Whom Concord leads, and Hatred warms,
Be roused; or liberty acquire,
Or in the great attempt expire."
He said no more; for in his breast
Conflicting thoughts the voice suppressed:
The fire of vengeance seemed to stream
From his swoln eyeball's yellow gleam.

And now the tumults of the war,
Mingling confusedly from afar,
Swell in the wind. Now louder cries
Distinct of hounds and men arise.
Forth from the brake, with beating heart,
The' assembled hares tumultuous start,
And, every straining nerve, on wing,
Away precipitately spring.
The hunting band, a signal given,
Thick thundering o'er the plain are driven;
O'er cliff abrupt, and shrubby mound,
And river broad, impetuous bound;
Now plunge amid the forest shades,
Glance through the openings of the glades;
Now o'er the level valley sweep,
Now with short steps strain up the steep;
While backward from the hunter's eyes
The landscape like a torrent flies.
At last an ancient wood they gained,
By pruner's axe yet unprofaned.
High o'er the rest, by Nature reared,
The oak's majestic boughs appeared;
Beneath a copse of various hue
In barbarous luxuriance grew.
No knife had curbed the rambling sprays,
No hand had wove the' implicit maze.
The flowering thorn, self-taught to wind,
The hazle's stubborn stem intwined,
And bramble twigs were wreathed around,
And rough furze crept along the ground.
Here sheltering, from the sons of murther,
The hares drag their tired limbs no further.

But lo, the western wind ere long
Was loud, and roared the woods among;
From rustling leaves, and crashing boughs,
The sound of wo and war arose.
The hares distracted scour the grove,
As terror and amazement drove;
But danger, wheresoe'er they fled,
Still seemed impending o'er their head.
Now crowded in a grotto's gloom,
All hopes extinct, they wait their doom.

Dire was the silence, till, at length,
Even from despair deriving strength,
With bloody eye, and furious look,
A daring youth arose, and spoke:—
"O wretched race, the scorn of Fate,
Whom ills of every sort await!
O, cursed with keenest sense to feel
The sharpest sting of every ill!
Say ye, who, fraught with mighty scheme,
Of liberty and vengeance dream,
What now remains? To what recess
Shall we our weary steps address,
Since fate is evermore pursuing
All ways, and means to work our ruin?
Are we alone, of all beneath,
Condemned to misery worse than death!
Must we, with fruitless labour, strive
In misery worse than death to live!
No. Be the smaller ill our choice:
So dictates Nature's powerful voice.
Death's pang will in a moment cease;
And then, All hail, eternal peace!"
Thus while he spoke, his words impart
The dire resolve to every heart.
A distant lake in prospect lay,
That, glittering in the solar ray,
Gleamed through the dusky trees, and shot
A trembling light along the grot:
Thither with one consent they bend,
Their sorrows with their lives to end,
While each, in thought, already hears
The water hissing in his ears.
Fast by the margin of the lake,
Concealed within a thorny brake,
A linnet sate, whose careless lay
Amused the solitary day.
Careless he sung, for on his breast
Sorrow no lasting trace impressed;
When suddenly he heard a sound
Of swift feet traversing the ground.
Quick to the neighbouring tree he flies,
Thence trembling casts around his eyes;
No foe appeared, his fears were vain;
Pleased he renews the sprightly strain.
The hares, whose noise had caused his fright,
Saw with surprise the linnet's flight.
"Is there on earth a wretch, (they said)
Whom our approach can strike with dread?
An instantaneous change of thought
To tumult every bosom wrought.
So fares the system-building sage,
Who, plodding on from youth to age,
At last on some foundation-dream
Has reared aloft his goodly scheme,
And proved his predecessors fools,
And bound all nature by his rules;
So fares he in that dreadful hour,
When injured Truth exerts her power,
Some new phenomenon to raise;
Which, bursting on his frighted gaze,
From its proud summit to the ground
Proves the whole edifice unsound.
"Children," thus spoke a hare sedate,
Who oft had known the' extremes of fate,
"In slight events the docile mind
May hints of good instruction find.
That our condition is the worst,
And we with such misfortunes cursed
As all comparison defy,
Was late the universal cry.
When lo, an accident so slight
As yonder little linnet's flight,
Has made your stubborn heart confess
(So your amazement bids me guess)
That all our load of woes and fears
Is but a part of what he bears.
Where can he rest secure from harms,
Whom e'en a helpless hare alarms?
Yet he repines not at his lot,
When past, the danger is forgot:
On yonder bough he trims his wings,
And with unusual rapture sings;
While we, less wretched, sink beneath
Our lighter ills, and rush to death.
No more of this unmeaning rage,
But hear, my friends, the words of age.
"When by the winds of autumn driven
The scattered clouds fly cross the heaven,
Oft have we, from some mountain's head,
Beheld the alternate light and shade
Sweep the long vale. Here hovering lours
The shadowy cloud; there downward pours,
Streaming direct, a flood of day,
Which from the view flies swift away;
It flies, while other shades advance,
And other streaks of sunshine glance.
Thus chequered is the life below
With gleams of joy, and clouds of wo.
Then hope not, while we journey on,
Still to be basking in the sun:
Nor fear, though now in shades ye mourn,
That sunshine will no more return.
If, by your terrors overcome,
Ye fly before the' approaching gloom,
The rapid clouds your flight pursue,
And darkness still o'ercasts your view.
Who longs to reach the radiant plain
Must onward urge his course amain;
For doubly swift the shadow flies,
When 'gainst the gale the pilgrim plies.
At least be firm, and undismayed
Maintain your ground! the fleeting shade
Ere long spontaneous glides away,
And gives you back the' enlivening ray.
Lo, while I speak, our danger past!
No more the shrill horn's angry blast

Howls in our ear; the savage roar
Of war and murder is no more.
Then snatch the moment fate allows,
Nor think of past or future woes."
He spoke; and hope revives; the lake
That instant one and all forsake,
In sweet amusement to employ
The present sprightly hour of joy.
Now from the western mountain's brow
Compassed with clouds of various glow,
The sun a broader orb displays,
And shoots aslope his ruddy rays.
The lawn assumes a fresher green,
And dew-drops spangle all the scene.
The balmy zephyr breathes along,
The shepherd sings his tender song,
With all their lays the groves resound,
And falling waters murmur round.
Discord and care were put to flight,
And all was peace and calm delight.

ELEGY.*

Still shall unthinking man substantial deem
The forms that fleet through life's deceitful dream?
On clouds, where Fancy's beam amusive plays,
Shall heedless Hope the towering fabric raise?
Till at Death's touch the fairy visions fly,
And real scenes rush dismal on the eye;
And, from Elysium's balmy slumber torn,
The startled soul awakes, to think and mourn.
O ye, whose hours in jocund train advance,
Whose spirits to the song of gladness dance,
Who flowery vales in endless view survey,
Glittering in beams of visionary day;
O, yet while fate delays th' impending wo,
Be roused to thought, anticipate the blow;
Lest, like the lightning's glance, the sudden ill
Flash to confound, and penetrate to kill;
Lest, thus encompassed with funereal gloom
Like me, ye bend o'er some untimely tomb,
Pour your wild ravings in Night's frighted ear,
And half pronounce heaven's sacred doom severe.
Wise, Beauteous, Good! O every grace combined,
That charms the eye, or captivates the mind!
Fair as the floweret opening on the morn,
Whose leaves bright drops of liquid pearl adorn!
Sweet, as the downy-pinioned gale, that roves
To gather fragrance in Arabian groves!
Mild as the strains, that, at the close of day,
Warbling remote, along the vales decay!——
Yet, why with these compared? What tints so fine,
What sweetness, mildness, can be matched with thine?
Why roam abroad? Since still, to Fancy's eyes,
I see, I see thy lovely form arise.
Still let me gaze, and every care beguile,
Gaze on that cheek, where all the Graces smile;
That soul-expressing eye, benignly bright,
Where meekness beams ineffable delight;
That brow, where Wisdom sits enthroned serene,
Each feature forms, and dignifies the mien
Still let me listen while her words impart
The sweet effusions of the blameleless heart,
Till all my soul, each tumult charm'd away,
Yeilds, gently led, to Virtue's easy sway.
By thee inspir'd, O Virtue! Age is young,
And music warbles from the faltering tongue:
Thy ray creative cheers the clouded brow,
And decks the faded cheek with rosy glow,
Brightens the joyless aspect, and supplies
Pure heavenly lustre to the languid eyes:
But when Youth's living bloom reflects thy beams,
Resistless on the view the glory streams.
Love, Wonder, Joy, alternately alarm,
And Beauty dazzles with angelic charm.

Ah, whither fled!——ye dear illusions, stay.
Lo, pale and silent lies the lovely clay——
How are the roses on that cheek decayed,
Which late the purple light of youth displayed!
Health on her form each sprightly grace bestowed·
With life and thought each speaking feature glow'd.
Fair was the flower, and soft the vernal sky;
Elate with hope, we deemed no tempest nigh;
When lo, a whirlwind's instantaneous gust
Left all its beauties withering in the dust.

All cold the hand that soothed Wo's weary head!
And quenched the eye, the pitying tear that shed!
And mute the voice, whose pleasing accents stole,
Infusing balm into the rankled soul!
O Death, why arm with cruelty thy power,
And spare the idle weed, yet lop the flower?
Why fly thy shafts in lawless error driven?
Is Virtue then no more the care of Heaven?——
But peace, bold thought! be still my bursting heart!
We, not Eliza, felt the fatal dart.
'Scaped the dark dungeon, does the slave complain,
Nor bless the hand that broke the galling chain?
Say, pines not virtue for the lingering morn,
On this dark wild condemned to roam forlorn?
Where Reason's meteor-rays, with sickly glow,
O'er the dun gloom a dreadful glimmering throw?
Disclosing dubious to the affrighted eye,
O'erwhelming mountains tottering from on high,
Black billowy seas in storms perpetual tossed,
And weary ways in wildering labyrinths lost.
O happy stroke! that burst the bonds of clay,
Darts through the rending gloom the blaze of day,
And wings the soul with boundless flight to soar,
Where dangers threat, and fears alarm no more.

Transporting thought! here let me wipe away
The tear of grief, and wake a bolder lay.
But ah! the swimming eye o'erflows anew,—
Nor check the sacred drops to pity due;

* On Mrs Walker, a sister of Lord Monboddo.

Lo, where in speechless, hopeless anguish, bend
O'er her loved dust, the Parent, Brother, Friend!
How vain the hope of man! But cease thy strain,
Nor Sorrow's dread solemnity profane;
Mixed with yon drooping Mourners, on her bier
In silence shed the sympathetic tear.

EPITAPH:

BEING PART OF AN INSCRIPTION FOR A MONUMENT,

To be erected by a Gentleman to the Memory of his Lady.

FAREWELL, my best beloved; whose heavenly mind
Genius with virtue, strength with softness joined;
Devotion, undebased by pride or art,
With meek simplicity, and joy of heart;
Though sprightly, gentle; though polite, sincere;
And only of thyself a judge severe;
Unblamed, unequalled in each sphere of life,
The tenderest Daughter, Sister, Parent, Wife.
In thee their Patroness the afflicted lost;
Thy friends, their pattern, ornament, and boast;
And I—but ah, can words my loss declare,
Or paint the extremes of transport and despair!
O Thou, beyond what verse or speech can tell,
My guide, my friend, my best beloved, farewell!

THE HERMIT.

AT the close of the day, when the hamlet is still,
And mortals the sweets of forgetfulness prove,
When nought but the torrent is heard on the hill,
And nought but the nightingale's song in the grove;
'Twas thus, by the cave of the mountain afar,
While his harp rung symphonious, a Hermit began;
No more with himself, or with nature at war,
He thought as a Sage, though he felt as a man.

"Ah why, all abandoned to darkness and wo,
Why, lone Philomela, that languishing fall?
For Spring shall return, and a lover bestow,
And sorrow no longor thy bosom inthral.
But, if pity inspire thee, renew the sad lay,
Mourn, sweetest complainer, Man calls thee to mourn;
O sooth him, whose pleasures like thine pass away.
Full quickly they pass—but they never return.

"Now gliding remote, on the verge of the sky,
The moon half extinguished her crescent displays:
But lately I marked, when majestic on high
She shone, and the planets were lost in her blaze.
Roll on thou fair orb, and with gladness pursue
The path that conducts thee to splendour again:
But man's faded glory what change shall renew?
Ah, fool! to exult in a glory so vain!

"'Tis night and the landscape is lovely no more;
I mourn, but ye woodlands, I mourn not for you;
For morn is approaching, your charms to restore,
Perfumed with fresh fragrance, and glittering with dew.
Nor yet for the ravage of Winter I mourn:
Kind Nature the embryo-blossom will save.
But when shall spring visit the mouldering urn?
O when shall it dawn on the night of the grave!"

'Twas thus, by the glare of false science betrayed,
That leads, to bewilder; and dazzles, to blind;
My thoughts wont to roam, from shade onward to shade,
Destruction before me, and sorrow behind.
"O pity, great Father of light! (then I cried)
Thy creature, who fain would not wander from Thee!
Lo, humbled in dust, I relinquish my pride;
From doubt and from darkness thou only canst free."

And darkness and doubt are now flying away;
No longer I roam in conjecture forlorn;
So breaks on the traveller, faint and astray,
The bright and the balmy effulgence of morn:
See Truth, Love, and Mercy, in triumph descending,
And Nature all glowing in Eden's first bloom!
On the cold cheek of Death smiles and roses are blending,
And Beauty Immortal awakes from the tomb.

EPITAPH ON THE AUTHOR.

BY HIMSELF.

ESCAPED the gloom of mortal life, a soul
Here leaves its mouldering tenement of clay,
Safe, where no cares their whelming billows roll,
No doubts bewilder, and no hopes betray.

Like thee, I once have stemmed the sea of life;
Like thee, have languished after empty joys;
Like thee, have laboured in the stormy strife;
Been grieved for trifles, and amused with toys.

Yet for awhile, 'gainst passion's threatful blast
Let steady reason urge the struggling oar;
Shot through the dreary gloom, the morn at last
Gives to thy longing eye the blissful shore.

Forget my frailties, thou art also frail;
Forgive my lapses, for thyself may'st fall;
Nor read, unmoved, my artless tender tale,
I was a friend, oh man! to thee, to all.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

WILLIAM COLLINS.

Contents.

Page.

The Life of the Author, ... ii

ORIENTAL ECLOGUES.

Eclogue I. 1
Eclogue II. 2
Eclogue III. . . . . ib.
Eclogue IV. 3

ODES.

Ode to Pity, ... 4
Ode to Fear, ... 5
Ode to Simplicity, ... ib.
Ode on the Poetical Character, ... 6
Ode written in the year 1746, ... 7
Ode to Mercy, ... ib.
Ode to Liberty, ... ib.

Page.

Ode to a Lady, on the death of Colonel Charles Ross, in the action of Fontenoy. Written in May, 1745. 9
Ode to Evening, ... 10
Ode to Peace, ... ib.
The Manners. An Ode, ... ib.
The Passions. An Ode for Music, ... 11
An Epistle to Sir Thomas Hanmer, on his Edition of Shakspeare's Works, ... 12
Dirge in Cymbeline, ... 14
Ode on the death of Mr. Thomson, ... ib.
Verses written on a Paper which contained a Piece of Bride-cake, ... 15
Ode on the popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland, ... ib.
Supplementary Stanzas on the same, by William Erskine, Esq., ... 18

The Life of William Collins.

William Collins was born at Chichester on the twenty-fifth day of December, about 1720. His father was a hatter of good reputation. He was in 1733, as Dr. Wharton has kindly informed me, admitted a scholar of Winchester College, where he was educated by Dr. Burton. His English exercises were better than his Latin.

He first courted the notice of the public by some verses to a "Lady Weeping," published in "The Gentleman's Magazine."

In 1740, he stood first in the list of the scholars to be received in succession at New College, but unhappily there was no vacancy. He became a Commoner of Queen's College, probably with a scanty maintenance; but was, in about half a year, elected a *Demy* of Magdalen College, where he continued till he had taken a bachelor's degree, and then suddenly left the University; for what reason I know not that he told.

He now (about 1744) came to London a literary adventurer, with many projects in his head, and very little money in his pocket. He designed many works; but his great fault was irresolution, or the frequent calls of immediate necessity broke his schemes, and suffered him to pursue no settled purpose. A man doubtful of his dinner, or trembling at a creditor, is not much disposed to abstracted meditation, or remote inquiries. He published proposals for a History of the Revival of Learning; and I have heard him speak with great kindness of Leo the Tenth, and with keen resentment of his tasteless successor. But probably not a page of his history was ever written. He planned several tragedies, but he only planned them. He wrote now and then odes and other poems, and did something, however little.

About this time I fell into his company. His appearance was decent and manly; his knowledge considerable, his views extensive, his conversation elegant, and his disposition cheerful. By degrees I gained his confidence; and one day was admitted to him when he was immured by a bailiff, that was prowling in the street. On this occasion recourse was had to the booksellers, who, on the credit of a translation of Aristotle's Poetics, which he engaged to write with a large commentary, advanced as much money as enabled him to escape into the country. He showed me the guineas safe in his hand. Soon afterwards his uncle, Mr. Martin, a lieutenant-colonel, left him about two thousand pounds; a sum which Collins could scarcely think exhaustible, and which he did not live to exhaust. The guineas were then repaid and the translation neglected.

But man is not born for happiness. Collins, who, while he *studied to live*, felt no evil but poverty, no sooner *lived to study* than his life was assailed by more dreadful calamities, disease and insanity.

Mr. Collins was a man of extensive literature, and of vigorous faculties. He was acquainted not only with the learned tongues, but with the Italian, French, and Spanish languages. He had employed his mind chiefly upon works of fiction, and subjects of fancy; and, by indulging some peculiar habits of thought, was eminently delighted with those flights of imagination which pass the bounds of nature, and to which the mind is reconciled only by a passive acquiescence in popular traditions. He loved fairies, genii, giants, and monsters; he delighted to rove through the meanders of enchantment, to gaze on the magnificence of golden palaces, to repose by the water-falls of Elysian gardens.

This was, however, the character rather of his inclination than his genius; the grandeur of wildness, and the novelty of extravagance, was always desired by him, but were not always attained. Yet, as diligence is never wholly lost, if his efforts sometimes caused harshness and obscurity, they likewise produced, in happier moments, sublimity and splendour. This idea which he had formed of excellence, led him to oriental fictions and allegorical imagery; and perhaps, while he was intent upon description, he did not sufficiently cultivate sentiment. His poems are the productions of a mind not deficient in fire, nor unfurnished with knowledge either of books or life, but somewhat obstructed in its progress by deviation in quest of mistaken beauties.

Upon the whole, Collins, by his taste and attainments, appears to have been peculiarly adapted for the higher walks of poetry. His odes, from which he derives his chief poetical fame, notwithstanding the disparaging remarks of Dr. Johnson, are now almost universally regarded as the first productions of the kind in the English language for vigour of conception, boldness and variety of personification, and genuine warmth of feeling The originality of Collins consists, not in his sentiment, but in the highly figurative garb in which he clothes abstract ideas, in the felicity of his ex-

pressions, and in his skill in embodying ideal creations. His chief defect is an occasional mysticism. His temperament was, in the strictest meaning of the word, poetical; and had he existed under happier circumstances, and enjoyed the undisturbed exercise of his faculties, he would probably have surpassed most, if not all, of his contemporaries, during the very prosaic period which immediately followed the death of Pope.

His morals were pure, and his opinions pious: in a long continuance of poverty, and long habits of dissipation, it can not be expected that any character should be exactly uniform. There is a degree of want by which the freedom of agency is almost destroyed; and long association with fortuitous companions will at last relax the strictness of truth, and abate the fervour of sincerity. That this man, wise and virtuous as he was, passed always unentangled through the snares of life, it would be prejudice and temerity to affirm; but it may be said that at least he preserved the source of action unpolluted, that his principles were never shaken, that his distinctions of right and wrong were never confounded, and that his faults had nothing of malignity or design, but proceeded from some unexpected pressure or casual temptation.

The latter part of his life can not be remembered but with pity and sadness. He languished some years under that depression of mind which enchains the faculties without destroying them, and leaves reason the knowledge of right without the power of pursuing it. These clouds, which he perceived gathering on his intellects, he endeavoured to disperse by travel, and passed into France: but found himself constrained to yield to his malady, and returned. He was for some time confined in a house of lunatics, and afterwards retired to the care of his sister in Chichester, where death, in 1756, came to his relief.

After his return from France, the writer of this character paid him a visit at Islington, where he was waiting for his sister, whom he had directed to meet him: there was then nothing of disorder discernible in his mind by any but himself: but he had withdrawn from study, and travelled with no other book than an English Testament, such as children carry to school: when his friend took it into his hand, out of curiosity to see what companion a man of letters had chosen, "I have but one book," said Collins, "but that is the best."

Such was the fate of Collins, with whom I once delighted to converse, and whom I yet remember with tenderness.

He was visited at Chichester in his last illness, by his learned friends Dr. Warton and his brother; to whom he spoke with disapprobation of his Oriental Eclogues, as not sufficiently expressive of Asiatic manners, and called them his Irish Eclogues. He showed them, at the same time, an ode inscribed to Mr. John Home, on the superstitions of the Highlands; which they thought superior to his other works.

His disorder was not alienation of mind, but general laxity and feebleness, a deficiency rather of his vital than intellectual powers. What he spoke wanted neither judgment nor spirit; but a few minutes exhausted him, so that he was forced to rest upon the couch, till a short cessation restored his powers, and he was again able to talk with his former vigour.

The approaches of this dreadful malady he began to feel soon after his uncle's death; and with the usual weakness of men so diseased, eagerly snatched that temporary relief with which the table and the bottle flatter and seduce. But his health continually declined, and he grew more and more burthensome to himself.

Mr. Collins's first production is added here from the "Poetical Calendar."

TO MISS AURELIA C——R,

On her Weeping at her Sister's Wedding.

Cease, fair Aurelia! cease to mourn;
Lament not Hannah's happy state:
You may be happy in your turn,
And seize the treasure you regret.

With Love united Hymen stands,
And softly whispers to your charms,
"Meet but your lover in my bands,
"You'll find your sister in his arms."

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

WILLIAM COLLINS.

Oriental Eclogues.

ECLOGUE I.

SELIM; OR THE SHEPHERD'S MORAL.

Scene, a Valley near Badgat. Time, the Morning.

"Ye Persian maids, attend your poets lays,
And hear how shepherds pass their golden days.
Not all are blest whom Fortune's hand sustains
With wealth in courts; nor all that haunt the plains:
Well may your hearts believe the truths I tell;
Tis virtue makes the bliss, where'er we dwell."

Thus Selim sung, by sacred Truth inspired;
Nor praise, but such as Truth bestowed, desired:
Wise in himself, his meaning songs conveyed
Informing morals to the shepherd maid;
Or taught the swains that surest bliss to find,
What groves nor streams bestow, a virtuous mind.

When sweet and blushing, like a virgin bride,
The radiant morn resumed her orient pride;
When wanton gales along the vallies play,
Breathe on each flower, and bear their sweets away;
By Tigris' wandering waves he sat and sung,
This useful lesson for the fair and young.

"Ye Persian dames," he said, "to you belong—
Well may they please—the morals of my song:
No fairer maids, I trust, than you are found,
Graced with soft arts, the peopled world around!
The morn, that lights you, to your loves supplies
Each gentler ray delicious to your eyes:
For you those flowers her fragrant hands bestow;
And yours the love that kings delight to know.
Yet think not these, all beauteous as they are,
The best kind blessings heaven can grant the fair!
Who trust alone in beauty's feeble ray
Boast but the worth Bassora's pearls display:
Drawn from the deep we own their surface bright;
But dark within, they drink no lustrous light;
Such are the maids, and such the charms they boast,
By sense unaided, or to virtue lost,
Self-flattering sex! your hearts believe in vain
That love shall blind, when once he fires the swain
Or hope a lover by your faults to win,
As spots on ermine beautify the skin:
Who seeks secure to rule be first her care
Each softer virtue that adorns the fair;
Each tender passion man delights to find;
The loved perfections of a female mind!

Blest were the days when Wisdom held her reign,
And shepherds sought her on the silent plain!
With Truth she wedded in the secret grove;
Immortal Truth; and daughters blessed their love.
—O haste, fair maids! ye Virtues, come away!
Sweet Peace and Plenty lead you on your way;
The balmy shrub for you shall love our shore,
By Ind excelled, or Araby, no more.

Lost to our fields, for so the fates ordain,
The dear deserters shall return again.
Come thou, whose thoughts as limpid springs are clear,
To lead the train, sweet Modesty, appear:
Here make thy court amidst our rural scene,
And shepherd girls shall own thee for their queen:
With thee be Chastity, of all afraid,
Distrusting all;—a wise suspicious maid;—
But man the most:—not more the mountain-doe
Holds the swift falcon for her deadly foe.
Cold is her breast, like flowers that drink the dew,
A silken veil conceals her from the view.
No wild desires amidst thy train be known,
But Faith, whose heart is fixed on one alone
Desponding Meekness, with her downcast eyes,
And friendly Pity, full of tender sighs:
And Love the last: by these your hearts approve
These are the virtues that must lead to love."

Thus sung the swain; and ancient legends say
The maids of Bagdat verified the lay:
Dear to the plains, the Virtues came along;
The shepherds loved; and Selim blessed his song.

ECLOGUE II.

HASSAN; OR, THE CAMEL-DRIVER.

Scene, the Desert. Time, Mid-day.

In silent horror o'er the boundless waste
The driver Hassan with his camels past:
One cruise of water on his back he bore,
And his light scrip contained a scanty store;
A fan of painted feathers in his hand,
To guard his shaded face from scorching sand,
The sultry sun had gained the middle sky,
And not a tree, and not an herb was nigh;
The beasts with pain their dusty way pursue:
Shrill roared the winds, and dreary was the view!
With desperate sorrow wild, the affrighted man
Thrice sighed; thrice struck his breast; and thus began:
"Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
When first from Schiraz' walls I bent my way!"

Ah! little thought I of the blasting wind,
The thirst, or pinching hunger, that I find!
Bethink thee, Hassan, where shall thirst assuage,
When fails this cruise, his unrelenting rage?
Soon shall this scrip its precious load resign;
Then what but tears and hunger shall be thine?

Ye mute companions of my toils, that bear,
In all my griefs a more than equal share!
Here, where no springs in murmurs break away,
Or moss-crowned fountains mitigate the day,
In vain ye hope the green delights to know
Which plains more blest, or verdant vales bestow;
Here rocks alone, and tasteless sands are found;
And faint and sickly winds for ever howl around.
"Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
When first from Schiraz' walls I bent my way!"

Curst be the gold and silver which persuade
Weak men to follow far fatiguing trade!
The lily peace outshines the silver store;
And life is dearer than the golden ore,
Yet money tempts us o'er the desert brown,
To every distant mart and wealthy town.
Full oft we tempt the land, and oft the sea:
And are we only yet repaid by thee?
—Ah! why was ruin so attractive made?
Or why fond man so easily betrayed?
Why heed we not, while mad we haste along,
The gentle voice of peace, or pleasure's song?
Or wherefore think the flowery mountain's side,
The fountain's murmurs, and the valley's pride,
Why think we these less pleasing to behold
Than dreary deserts, if they lead to gold?
"Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
When first from Schiraz' walls I bent my way!"

O cease, my fears!—all frantic as I go,
When thought creates unnumbered scenes of wo
What if the lion in his rage I meet?—
Oft in the dust I view his printed feet:
And, fearful! oft, when day's declining light
Yields her pale empire to the mourner night,
By hunger roused he scours the groaning plain,
Gaunt wolves and sullen tigers in his train:
Before them Death with shrieks directs their way
Fills the wild yell, and leads them to their prey.
"Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
When first from Schiraz' walls I bent my way!"

At that dead hour the silent asp shall creep,
If aught of rest I find, upon my sleep:
Or some swoln serpent twist his scales around,
And wake to anguish with a burning wound.
Thrice happy they, the wise contented poor,
From lust of wealth, and dread of death secure!
They tempt no deserts, and no griefs they find;
Peace rules the day, where reason rules the mind.
"Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
When first from Schiraz' walls I bent my way!"

O hapless youth!—for she thy love had won—
The tender Zara will be most undone!
Big swelled my heart, and owned the powerful maid,
When fast she dropt her tears, as thus she said:
"Farewell the youth whom sighs could not detain;
Whom Zara's breaking heart implored in vain!
Yet, as thou goest, may every blast arise
Weak and unfelt as these rejected sighs!
Safe o'er the wild, no perils may'st thou see,
No griefs endure; nor weep false youth, like me."
—O let me safely to the fair return;
Say, with a kiss, she must not, shall not mourn;
O! let me teach my heart to lose its fears,
Recalled by Wisdom's voice, and Zara's tears.

He said, and called on heaven to bless the day,
When back to Schiraz' walls he bent his way.

ECLOGUE III.

ABRA; OR, THE GEORGIAN SULTANA.

Scene, a Forest. Time, the Evening.

In Georgia's land, where Tefflis' towers are seen,
In distant view, along the level green,
While evening dews enrich the glittering glade,
And the tall forests casts a longer shade,
What time 'tis sweet o'er fields of rice to stray,
Or scent the breathing maze at setting day;

Amidst the maids of Zagan's peaceful grove,
Emyra sung the pleasing cares of love.

Of Abra first began the tender strain,
Who led her youth with flocks upon the plain:
At morn she came those willing flocks to lead,
Where lilies rear them in the watery mead;
From early dawn the livelong hours she told,
Till late at silent eve she penned the fold:
Deep in the grove, beneath the secret shade,
A various wreath of odorous flowers she made;
Gay-motleyed pinks* and sweet jonquils she chose,
The violet blue that on the moss-bank grows;
All sweet to sense, the flaunting rose was there;
The finished chaplet well adorned her hair.

Great Abbas chanced that fated morn to stray,
By love conducted from the chase away;
Among the vocal vales he heard her song;
And sought, the vales and echoing groves among;
At length he found, and wooed the rural maid;
She knew the monarch, and with fear obeyed.
"Be every youth like royal Abbas moved;
And every Georgian maid like Abra loved!"

The royal lover bore her from the plain;
Yet still her crook and bleating flock remain;
Oft as she went she backward turned her view,
And bade that crook and bleating flock adieu.
Fair happy maid! to other scenes remove;
To richer scenes of golden power and love!
Go leave the simple pipe and shepherd's strain;
With love delight thee, and with Abbas reign!
"Be every youth like royal Abbas moved;
And every Georgian maid like Abra loved."

Yet, 'midst the blaze of courts, she fixed her love
On the cool fountain, or the shady grove:
Still, with the shepherd's innocence, her mind
To the sweet vale, and flowery mead inclined;
And, oft as spring renewed the plains with flowers,
Breathed his soft gales, and led the fragrant hours,
With sure return she sought the sylvan scene,
The breezy mountains, and the forests green.
Her maids around her moved, a duteous band!
Each bore a crook, all-rural, in her hand:
Some simple lay, of flocks and herds they sung;
With joy the mountain and the forest rung.
"Be every youth like royal Abbas moved;
And every Georgian maid like Abra loved."

And oft the royal lover left the care
And thorns of state, attendant on the fair;
Oft to the shades and low-roofed cots retired;
Or sought the vale where first his heart was fired:
A russet mantle, like a swain he wore;
And thought of crowns, and busy courts no more.

"Be every youth like royal Abbas moved;
And every Georgian maid like Abra loved."

Blest was the life that royal Abbas led:
Sweet was his love, and innocent his bed.
What if in wealth the noble maid excel?
The simple shepherd girl can love as well.
Let those who ruled on Persia's jewelled throne
Be famed for love, and gentlest love alone;
Or wreath, like Abbas, full of fair renown,
The lover's myrtle with the warrior's crown.
O happy days! the maids around her say;
O haste; profuse of blessings, haste away;
"Be every youth, like royal Abbas, moved;
And every Georgian maid like Abra loved."

ECLOGUE IV.

AGIB AND SECANDER; OR, THE FUGITIVES.

Scene, a Mountain in Circassia. Time, Midnight.

In fair Circassia, where to love inclined
Each swain was blest, for every maid was kind;
At that still hour when awful midnight reigns,
And none but wretches haunt the twilight plains;
What time the moon had hung her lamp on high,
And past in radiance through the cloudless sky;
Sad, o'er the dews, two brother shepherds fled
Where wildering fear and desperate sorrow led:
Fast as they prest their flight, behind them lay
Wide ravaged plains: and valleys stole away:
Along the mountain's bending sides they ran,
Till, faint and weak, Secander thus began.

SECANDER.

O stay thee, Agib, for my feet deny,
No longer friendly to my life, to fly.
Friend of my heart, O turn thee and survey!
Trace our sad flight through all its length of way!
And first review that long-extended plain,
And yon wide groves already past with pain!
Yon ragged cliff, whose dangerous path we tried!
And, last, this lofty mountain's weary side!

AGIB.

Weak as thou art, yet, hapless, must thou know
The toils of flight or some severer wo!
Still, as I haste, the Tartar shouts behind;
And shrieks and sorrows load the saddening wind:
In rage of heart, with ruin in his hand,
He blasts our harvests, and deforms our land.
Yon citron grove, whence first in fear we came,
Droops its fair honours to the conquering flame.
Far fly the swains, like us, in deep despair,
And leave to ruffian hands their fleecy care.

SECANDER.

Unhappy land, whose blessings tempt the sword
In vain, unheard, thou call'st thy Persian lord!

* That these flowers are found in very great abundance in some of the provinces of Persia; see the Modern History of Mr. Salmon.

In vain thou court'st him, helpless, to thine aid,
To shield the shepherd, and protect the maid!
Far off, in thoughtless indolence resigned,
Soft dreams of love and pleasure sooth his mind:
'Midst fair sultanas lost in idly joy,
No wars alarm him, and no fears annoy.

AGIB.

Yet these green hills in summer's sultry heat,
Have lent the monarch oft a cool retreat.
Sweet to the sight is Zabran's flowery plain;
At once by maids and shepherds loved in vain!
No more the virgins shall delight to rove
By Sargis' banks, or Irwan's shady grove;
On Tarkie's mountains catch the cooling gale,
Or breathe the sweets of Aly's flowery vale:
Fair scene! but, ah! no more with peace possest,
With ease alluring, and with plenty blest!
No more the shepherd's whitening tents appear,
Nor the kind products of a bounteous year;
No more the date, with snowy blossoms crowned!
But ruin spreads her baleful fires around.

ECANDER.

In vain Circassia boasts her spicy groves,
For ever famed for pure and happy loves:
In vain she boasts her fairest of the fair,
Their eyes blue languish, and their golden hair!
Those eyes in tears their fruitless grief must send
Those hairs the Tartar's cruel hand shall rend.

AGIB

Ye Georgian swains, that piteous learn from far
Circassia's ruin, and the waste of war:
Some weightier arms than crooks and staffs prepare
To shield your harvest, and defend your fair;
The Turk and Tartar like designs pursue,
Fixed to destroy and steadfast to undo.
Wild as his hand, in native deserts bred,
By lust incited, or by malice led,
The villain Arab, as he prowls for prey,
Oft marks with blood and wasting flames the way
Yet none so cruel as the Tartar foe,
To death inured, and nursed in scenes of wo.

He said; when loud along the vale was heard
A shriller shriek; and nearer fires appeared;
The affrighted shepherds, through the dews of night,
Wide o'er the moonlight hills renewed their flight

Odes.

ODE TO PITY.

O THOU, the friend of man assigned,
With balmy hands his wounds to bind,
And charm his frantic wo:
When first Distress, with dagger keen,
Broke forth to waste his destined scene,
His wild unsated foe!

By Pella's* bard, a magic name,
By all the griefs his thought could frame,
Receive my humble rite:
Long, Pity, let the nations view
Thy sky-worn robes of tenderest blue,
And eyes of dewy light!

But wherefore need I wander wide
To old Illissus' distant side
Deserted stream, and mute?
Wild Arunt too has heard thy strains,
And echo, midst thy native plains,
Been soothed by Pity's lute.

There first the wren in myrtles shed
On gentlest Otway's infant head,
To him thy cell was shown;
And while he sung the female heart,
With youth's soft notes unspoiled by art,
Thy turtles mixed their own.

Come, Pity, come, by fancy's aid,
E'en now, my thoughts, relenting maid,
Thy temple's pride design:
Its southern site, its truth complete,
Shall rise a wild enthusiast heat
In all who view the shrine.

There Picture's toils shall well relate,
How chance, or hard involving fate,
O'er mortal bliss prevail;
The buskined Muse shall near her stand,
And sighing prompt her tender hand
With each disastrous tale.

There let me oft, retired by day,
In dreams of passion melt away,
Allowed with thee to dwell:
There waste the mournful lamp of night,
Till, Virgin, thou again delight
To hear a British shell.

* Euripides, of whom Aristotle pronounces, on a comparison of him with Sophocles, that he was the greater master of the tender passions, ην τραγικωτερος.

† The river Arun runs by the village in Sussex, where Otway had his birth.

ODE TO FEAR.

THOU to whom the world unknown,
With all its shadowy shapes, is shown;
Who see'st, appalled, the unreal scene,
While Fancy lifts the veil between:
Ah Fear! ah frantic Fear!
I see, I see thee near.
I know thy hurried step; thy haggard eye!
Like thee I start; like thee disordered fly.
For lo, what monsters in thy train appear!
Danger, whose limbs of giant mould
What mortal eye can fixed behold?
Who stalks his round, an hideous form,
Howling amidst the midnight storm;
Or throws him on the ridgy steep
Of some loose hanging rock to sleep:
And with him thousand phantoms joined,
Who prompt to deeds accursed the mind:
And those, the fiends, who, near allied,
O'er Nature's wounds, and wrecks, preside;
While Vengeance, in the lurid air,
Lifts her red arm, exposed and bare:
On whom that ravening* brood of Fate
Who lap the blood of sorrow wait:
Who, Fear, this ghastly train can see,
And look not madly wild like thee?

EPODE.

IN earliest Greece, to thee, with partial choice,
The grief-full Muse, addrest her infant tongue;
The maids and matrons on her awful voice,
Silent and pale in wild amazement hung.

Yet he, the bard† who first invoked thy name,
Disdained in Marathon its power to feel:
For not alone he nursed the poet's flame,
But reached from Virtue's hand the patriot's steel.

But who is he whom later garlands grace;
Who left a while o'er Hybla's dews to rove,
With trembling eyes thy dreary steps to trace,
Where thou and furies shared the baleful grove!

Wrapt in thy cloudy veil, the incestuous queen‡
Sighed the sad call§ her son and husband heard,
When once alone it broke the silent scene,
And he the wretch of Thebes no more appeared.

O Fear, I know thee by my throbbing heart:
Thy withering power inspired each mournful line:
Though gentle Pity claim her mingled part,
Yet all the thunders of the scene are thine

ANTISTROPHE.

THOU who such weary lengths hast past,
Where wilt thou rest, mad Nymph, at last?
Say, wilt thou shroud in haunted cell
Where gloomy Rape and Murder dwell?
Or, in some hallowed seat,
'Gainst which the big waves beat,
Hear drowning seamen's cries, in tempests brought?
Dark power, with shuddering meek submitted thought.

Be mine to read the visions old
Which thy awakening bards have told:
And, lest thou meet my blasted view,
Hold each strange tale devoutly true;
Ne'er be I found, by thee o'erawed,
In that thrice-hallowed eve, abroad,
When ghosts, as cottage maids believe,
Their pebbled beds permitted leave;
And goblins haunt, from fire, or fen,
Or mine, or flood, the walks of men!

O thou whose spirit most possest
The sacred seat of Shakspeare's breast!
By all that from thy prophet broke,
In thy divine emotions spoke;
Hither again thy fury deal,
Teach me but once like him to feel:
His cypress wreath my meed decree,
And I, O Fear, will dwell with thee!

ODE TO SIMPLICITY.

O THOU by Nature taught
To breathe her genuine thought
In numbers warmly pure, and sweetly strong;
Who first on mountains wild,
In Fancy, loveliest child,
Thy babe, or Pleasure's, nursed the powers of song

Thou, who, with hermit heart,
Disdain'st the wealth of art,
And gauds, and pageant weeds, and trailing pall,
But com'st a decent maid,
In attic robe arrayed,
O chaste, unboastful Nymph, to thee I call!

By all the honied store
On Hybla's thymy shore;
By all her blooms, and mingled murmurs dear
By her* whose love-lorn wo,
In evening musings slow,
Soothed sweetly sad Electra's poet's ear:

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* Alluding to the Κυνας αφυκτες of Sophocles. See the Electra.

† Æschylus.

‡ Jocasta.

§ ——ουδ ετ' ορωρει βοη
Ην πεν Σωπη: φθεγμα δ' εξαιφνης τινος
Θωυξεν αυτον, ωστε παντας οσθιας
Στησαι φοβῳ δεισαντας εξαιφνης Τριχας.
See the Œdip. Colon. of Sophocles.

* The αηδων, or nightingale, for which Sophocles seems to have entertained a peculiar fondness.

By old Cephisus deep,
Who spread his wavy sweep,
In warbled wanderings, round thy green retreat;
On whose enamel'd side,
When holy Freedom died,
No equal haunt allured thy future feet.

O sister meek of Truth,
To my admiring youth,
Thy sober aid and native charms infuse!
The flowers that sweetest breathe,
Though beauty culled the wreath,
Still ask thy hand to raise their ordered hues.

While Rome could none esteem
But virtue's patriot theme,
You loved her hills, and led her laureat band:
But staid to sing alone
To one distinguished throne;
And turned thy face, and fled her altered land.

No more, in hall or bower,
The Passions own thy power;
Love, only Love her forceless numbers mean:
For thou hast left her shrine;
Nor olive more, nor vine,
Shall gain thy feet to bless the servile scene.

Though taste, though genius, bless
To some divine excess,
Faints the cold work, till thou inspire the whole;
What each, what all supply,
May court, may charm, our eye;
Thou, only thou canst raise the meeting soul!

Of these let others ask,
To aid some mighty task,
I only seek to find thy temperate vale;
Where oft my reed might sound
To maids and shepherds round,
And all thy sons, O Nature, learn my tale.

ODE ON THE POETICAL CHARACTER.

As once,—if, not with light regard,
I read aright that gifted bard,
--Him whose school above the rest
His loveliest elfin queen has blest;—
One, only one, unrivalled* fair,
Might hope the magic girdle wear,
At solemn turney hung on high,
The wish of each love-darting eye;

Lo! to each other nymph, in turn, applied,
As if, in air unseen, some hovering hand,

Some chaste and angel-friend to virgin-fame,
With whispered spell had burst the starting band,
It left unblessed her loathed dishonoured side,
Happier hopeless Fair, if never
Her baffled hand with vain endeavour,
Had touched that fatal zone to her denied!

Young Fancy thus, to me divinest name,
To whom, prepared and bathed in heaven,
The cest of amplest power is given:
To few the godlike gift assigns,
To gird their best prophetic loins,
And gaze her visions wild, and feel unmixed her flame!

The band, as fairy legends say,
Was wove on that creating day
When He, who called with thought to birth
Yon tented sky, this laughing earth,
And drest with springs and forests tall,
And poured the main engirting all,
Long by the loved enthusiast wooed,
Himself in some diviner mood,
Retiring, sat with her alone,
And placed her on his sapphire throne,
The whiles the vaulted shrine around,
Seraphic wires were heard to sound,
Now sublimest triumph swelling,
Now on love and mercy dwelling;
And she, from out the veiling cloud,
Breathed her magic notes aloud:
And thou, thou rich-haired youth of morn,
And all thy subject life was born!
The dangerous passions kept aloof,
Far from the sainted growing woof:
But near it sad ecstatic Wonder,
Listening the deep applauding thunder;
And Truth, in sunny vest arrayed,
By whose the tarsel's eyes were made:
All the shadowy tribes of mind,
In braided dance, their murmurs joined,
And all the bright uncounted powers
Who feed on Heaven's ambrosial flowers.
—Where is the bard whose soul can now
Its high presuming hopes avow!
Where he who thinks, with rapture blind,
This hallowed work for him designed?

High on some cliff, to heaven up-piled,
Of rude access, of prospect wild,
Where, tangled round the jealous steep,
Strange shades o'erbrow the valleys deep,
And holy Genii guard the rock,
Its glooms embrown, its springs unlock,
While on its rich ambitious head,
An Eden, like his own, lies spread,
I view that oak, the fancied glades among,
By which as Milton lay, his evening ear,
From many a cloud that dropped ethereal dew,

* Florimel. See Spenser, Leg. 4th.

Nigh sphered in heaven, its native strains could hear;
On which that ancient trump he reached was hung:
Thither oft his glory greeting,
From Waller's myrtle shades retreating,
With many a vow from Hope's aspiring tongue,
My trembling feet his guiding steps pursue;
In vain—Such bliss to one alone,
Of all the sons of soul, was known;
And Heaven, and Fancy, kindred powers,
Have now o'erturned th' inspiring bowers;
Or curtained close such scenes from every future view.

ODE,

Written in the beginning of the year 1746.

How sleep the brave who sink to rest,
By all their country's wishes blest!
When Spring, with dewy fingers cold,
Returns to deck their hallowed mould,
She there shall dress a sweeter sod
Than Fancy's feet have ever trod.

By fairy hands their knell is rung;
By forms unseen their dirge is sung;
There Honour comes, a pilgrim gray,
To bless the turf that wraps their clay;
And freedom shall awhile repair,
To dwell a weeping hermit there!

ODE TO MERCY.

STROPHE.

O Thou, who sit'st a smiling bride
By valour's armed and awful side,
Gentlest of sky-born forms, and best adored;
Who oft with songs, divine to hear,
Win'st from his fatal grasp the spear,
And hid'st in wreaths of flowers his bloodless sword!

Thou who, amidst the deathful field,
By godlike chiefs alone beheld,
Oft with thy bosom bare art found,
Pleading for him the youth who sinks to ground:
See, Mercy, see with pure and loaded hands,
Before thy shrine my country's genius stands,
And decks thy altar still, though pierced with many a wound!

ANTISTROPHE.

When he whom e'en our joys provoke,
The fiend of nature joined his yoke,
And rushed in wrath to make our isle his prey:
Thy form, from out thy sweet abode,
O'ertook him on his blasted road,
And stopped his wheels, and looked his rage away.
I see recoil his sable steeds,
That bore him swift to savage deeds,
Thy tender melting eyes they own;
O maid, for all thy love to Britain shown,
Where Justice bars her iron tower,
To thee we build a roseate bower,
Thou, thou shalt rule our queen, and share our monarch's throne.

ODE TO LIBERTY.

STROPHE.

Who shall awake the Spartan fife,
And call in solemn sounds to life,
The youths, whose locks divinely spreading,
Like vernal hyacinths in sullen hue,
At once the breath of fear and virtue shedding,
Applauding freedom loved of old to view?
What new Alcæus,* fancy-blest,
Shall sing the sword, in myrtles drest,
At wisdom's shrine awhile its flame concealing,
(What place so fit to seal a deed renowned?
Till she her brightest lightnings round revealing,
It leaped in glory forth, and dealt her prompted wound!
O goddess, in that feeling hour,
When most its sounds would court thy ears,
Let not my shell's misguided power†
E'er draw thy sad thy mindful tears.
No, Freedom, no, I will not tell
How Rome, before thy weeping face,
With heaviest sound, a giant-statue, fell,
Pushed by a wild and artless race
From off its wide ambitious base,
When Time his northern sons of spoil awoke,
And all the blended work of strength and grace,
With many a rude repeated stroke,
And many a barb'rous yell, to thousand fragments broke.

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* Alluding to that beautiful fragment of Alcæus.

Εν Μυρτου κλαδι το ξιφος φορησω,
Ωσπερ Αρμοδιος και Αριζογειτων,
Φιλταθ' Αρμοδι ουπω τεθνηκας,
Νησοις δ' εν Μακαρων Σε φασιν ειναι.
Εν μυρτου κλαδι το ξιφος φορησω,
Ωσπερ Αρμοδιος και Αριζογειτων,
Οτ' Αθηναιης εν θυσιαις,
Ανδρα Τυραννον ιππαρχον εκαινετην.
Αει Σφων κλειος εσσεται κατ' αιαν.
Φιλαθ' Αρμοδι' και Αριζογειτων.

† Μη μη ταυτα λεγωμες, α δακρυον ηγαγ' Αηοι.

Callimach. Υμνος εις Δημητρα.

EPODE.

Yet, e'en where'er the least appeared,
The admiring world thy hand revered;
Still 'midst the scattered states around,
Some remnants of her strength were found;
They saw, by what escaped the storm,
How wondrous rose her perfect form;
How in the great, the laboured whole,
Each mighty master poured his soul!
For sunny Florence, seat of art,
Beneath her vines preserved a part,
Till they,* whom Science loved to name,
(O who could fear it?) quenched her flame.
And lo, a humbler relic laid
In jealous Pisa's olive shade!
See small Marino† joins the theme,
Though least, not last in thy esteem:
Strike, louder strike the ennobling strings
To those,‡ whose merchant sons were kings;
To him,§ who, decked with pearly pride,
In Adria weds his green-haired bride;
Hail, port of glory, wealth, and pleasure,
Ne'er let me change this Lydian measure:
Nor e'er her former pride relate,
To sad Liguria's‖ bleeding state.
Ah no! more pleased thy haunts I seek,
On wild Helvetia's¶ mountains bleak:
(Where, when the favoured of thy choice,
The daring archer heard thy voice;
Forth from his eyrie roused in dread,
The ravening eagle northward fled.)
Or dwells in willowed meads more near,
With those** to whom thy stork is dear;
Those whom the rod of Alva bruised,
Whose crown a British queen†† refused!
The magic works, thou feel'st the strains,
One holier name alone remains;
The perfect spell shall then avail,
Hail, nymph, adorned by Britain, hail!

ANTISTROPHE.

Beyond the measure vast of though,
The works, the wizard time has wrought!
The Gaul, 'tis held of antique story,
Saw Britain linked to his now adverse strand,*
No sea between, nor cliff sublime and hoary,
He passed with unwet feet through all our land.
To the blown Baltic then, they say,
The wild waves found another way,
Where Orcas howls, his wolfish mountains rounding,
Till all the banded west at once 'gan rise,
A wide wild storm e'en nature's self confounding,
Withering her giant sons with strange uncouth surprise.
This pillared earth, so firm and wide,
By winds and inward labours torn,
In thunders dread was pushed aside,
And down the shouldering billows borne
And see, like gems, her laughing train,
The little isles on every side,
Mona,† once hid from those who search the main,
Where thousand elfin shapes abide,
And Wight who cheeks the west'ring tide,
For thee consenting Heaven has each bestowed,
A fair attendant on her sovereign pride:
To thee this blest divorce she owed,
For thou hast made her vales thy loved, thy last abode?

SECOND EPODE.

Then too, 'tis said, an hoary pile
'Midst the green naval of our isle,
Thy shrine in some religious wood,
O soul-enforcing goddess, stood;
There oft the painted natives feet
Were wont thy form celestial meet:
Though now with hopeless toil we trace
Time's backward rolls, to find its place;
Whether the fiery-tressed Dane,
Or Roman's self o'erturned the fane,
Or in what heaven-left age it fell,
'Twere hard for modern song to tell.
Yet still, if Truth those beams infuse,
Which guide at once and charm the Muse,

* The family of the Medici.
† The little republic of San Marino.
‡ The Venetians.
§ The Doge of Venice.
‖ Genoa.
¶ Switzerland.
** The Dutch, amongst whom there are very severe penalties for those who are convicted of killing this bird. They are kept tame in almost all their towns, and particularly at the Hague, of the arms of which they make a part. The common people of Holland are said to entertain a superstitious sentiment, that if the whole species of them should become extinct, they should lose their liberties.
†† Queen Elizabeth

* This tradition is mentioned by several of our old historians. Some naturalists too have endeavoured to support the probability of the fact by arguments drawn from the correspondent disposition of the two opposite coasts. I do not remember that any poetical use has hitherto been made of it.
† There is a tradition in the Isle of Man, that a mermaid becoming enamoured of a young man of extraordinary beauty, took an opportunity of meeting him one day as he walked on the shore, and opened her passion to him, but was received with a coldness, occasioned by his horror and surprise at her appearance. This, however, was so misconstrued by the sea lady, that in revenge for his treatment of her, she punished the whole island, by covering it with a mist; so that all who attempted to carry on any commerce with it, either never arrived at it, but wandered up and down the sea, or were on a sudden wrecked upon its cliffs.

Beyond yon braided clouds that lie,
Paving the light embroidered sky,
Amidst the bright pavilioned plains,
The beauteous model still remains.
There, happier than in islands blest,
Or bowers by spring or Hebe drest,
The chiefs who fill our Albion's story,
In warlike weeds, retired in glory,
Hear their consorted Druids sing
Their triumphs to the immortal string.
How may the Poet now unfold
What never tongue or numbers told?
How learn, delighted and amazed,
What hands unknown that fabric raised?
Ev'n now before his favoured eyes,
In Gothic pride it seems to rise!
Yet Græcia's graceful orders join,
Majestic through the mixed design,
The secret builder knew to choose
Each sphere-found gem of richest hues;
Whate'er heaven's purer mould contains
When nearer suns emblaze its veins;
There on the walls the patriot's sight
May ever hang with fresh delight,
And, graved with some prophetic rage,
Read Albion's fame through every age.
Ye forms divine, ye laureate band,
That near her inmost altar stand!
Now sooth her, to her blissful train
Blithe Concord's social form to gain:
Concord, whose myrtle wand can steep
E'en Anger's blood-shot eyes in sleep:
Before whose breathing bosom's balm
Rage drops his steel, and storms grow calm;
Her let our sires and matrons hoar
Welcome to Britain's ravaged shore;
Our youths, enamoured of the fair,
Play with the tangles of her hair,
Till, in one loud applauding sound,
The nations shout to her around,
O how supremely art thou blest,
Thou, lady—thou shalt rule the west!

ODE TO A LADY,

On the death of Colonel Ross, in the action of Fontenoy.

Written in May, 1745.

While, lost to all his former mirth,
Britannia's genius bends to earth,
And mourns the fatal day:
While stained with blood he strives to tear
Unseemly from his sea-green hair
The wreaths of cheerful May:

The thoughts which musing Pity pays,
And fond remembrance loves to raise,
Your faithful hours attend;
Still Fancy, to herself unkind,
Awakes to grief the softened mind,
And points the bleeding friend.

By rapid Scheld's descending wave
His country's vows shall bless the grave,
Where'er the youth is laid:
That sacred spot the village hind,
With every sweetest turf shall bind,
And Peace protect the shade.

Blest youth, regardful of thy doom,
Aerial hands shall build thy tomb,
With shadowy trophies crowned:
Whilst Honour bathed in tears shall rove
To sigh thy name through every grove,
And call his heroes round.

The warlike dead of every age,
Who fill the fair recording page,
Shall leave their sainted rest:
And, half reclining on his spear,
Each wondering chief by turns appear,
To hail the blooming guest.

Old Edward's sons, unknown to yield,
Shall crowd from Cressy's laureled field,
And gaze with fixed delight:
Again for Britain's wrongs they feel,
Again they snatch the gleamy steel,
And wish th' avenging fight.

But, lo! where, sunk in deep despair,
Her garments torn, her bosom bare,
Impatient Freedom lies!
Her matted tresses madly spread,
To every sod which wraps the dead,
She turns her joyless eyes.

Ne'er shall she leave that lowly ground
Till notes of triumph bursting round
Proclaim her reign restored:
Till William seek the sad retreat,
And bleeding at her sacred feet,
Present the sated sword.

If, weak to sooth so soft an heart,
These pictured glories nought impart,
To dry thy constant tear:
If yet, in Sorrow's distant eye,
Exposed and pale thou seest him lie,
Wild war insulting near;

Where'er from Time thou court'st relief,
The Muse shall still with social grief,
Her gentlest promise keep:
E'en humble Harting's cottaged vale
Shall learn the sad repeated tale,
And bid her shepherds weep.

ODE TO EVENING.

If aught of oaten stop, or pastoral song,
May hope, O pensive Eve, to sooth thine ear,
Like thy own brawling springs,
Thy springs, and dying gales:

O nymph reserved, while now the bright-haired sun,
Sits in yon western tent, whose cloudy skirts,
With brede ethereal wove,
O'erhang his wavy bed:

Now air is hushed, save where the weak-eyed bat,
With short, shrill shriek flits by on leathern wing,
Or where the beetle winds
His small but sullen horn,

As oft he rises 'midst the twilight path,
Against the pilgrim borne in heedless hum:
Now teach me, maid composed,
To breathe some softened strain,

Whose numbers, stealing through thy dark'ning vale,
May not unseemly with its stillness suit;
As musing slow, I hail,
Thy genial love return!

For when thy folding star arising shows
His paly circlet at his warning lamp
The fragrant Hours, and Elves
Who slept in buds the day,

And many a nymph who wreathes her brows with sedge,
And sheds the fresh'ning dew, and, lovelier still,
The pensive pleasures sweet,
Prepare thy shadowy car.

Then let me rove some wild and heathy scene;
Or find some ruin, 'midst its dreary dells,
Whose walls more awful nod
By thy religious gleams.

Or, if chill blustering winds, or driving rain,
Prevent my willing feet, be mine the hut,
That, from the mountain's side,
Views wilds, and swelling floods,

And hamlets brown, and dim-discovered spires;
And hears their simple bell; and marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

While Spring shall pour his showers, as oft he wont,
And bathe thy breathing tresses, meekest Eve!
While Summer loves to sport
Beneath thy lingering light;

While sallow Autumn fills thy lap with leaves
Or Winter, yelling through the troublous air,
Affrights thy shrinking train,
And rudely rends thy robes;

So long, regardful of thy quiet rule,
Shall Fancy, Friendship, Science, smiling Peace,
Thy gentlest influence own,
And love thy favourite name!

ODE TO PEACE.

O THOU, who bad'st thy turtles bear
Swift from his grasp thy golden hair,
And sought'st thy native skies;
When War, by vultures drawn from far,
To Britain bent his iron car,
And bade his storms arise!

Tired of his rude tyrannic sway,
Our youth shall fix some festive day,
His sullen shrines to burn;
But thou who hear'st the turning spheres,
What sounds may charm thy partial ears,
And gain thy blest return!

O Peace, thy injured robes up-bind!
O rise! and leave not one behind
Of all thy beamy train!
The British Lion, goddess sweet,
Lies stretched on earth, to kiss thy feet,
And own thy holier reign.

Let others court thy transient smile,
But come to grace thy western isle,
By warlike honour led;
And while around her ports rejoice,
While all her sons adore thy choice,
With him for ever wed!

THE MANNERS.—AN ODE.

FAREWELL, for clearer ken designed,
The dim-discovered tracts of mind;
Truths which, from action's path retired,
My silent search in vain required!
No more my sail that deep explores;
No more I search those magic shores;
What regions part the world of soul,
Or whence thy streams, Opinion, roll:
If e'er I round such fairy field,
Some power impart the spear and shield
At which the wizard passions fly:
By which the giant Follies die!

Farewell the porch whose roof is seen
Arched with th' enlivening olive's green;
Where Science, pranked in tissued vest,
By Reason, Pride, and Fancy drest,

Comes, like a bride, so trim arrayed,
To wed with Doubt in Plato's shade.

Youth of the quick uncheated sight,
Thy walks, Observance, more invite!
O thou who lov'st that ampler range,
Where life's wide prospects round thee change,
And, with her mingling sons allied,
Throw'st the prattling page aside,
To me, in converse sweet, impart
To read in man the native heart;
To learn, where Science sure is found,
From nature as she lives around;
And, gazing oft her mirror true,
By turns each shifting image view!
Till meddling Art's officious lore
Reverse the lessons taught before;
Alluring from a safer rule,
To dream in her enchanted school:
Thou, Heaven, whate'er of great we boast,
Hast blest this social science most.

Retiring hence to thoughtful cell,
As Fancy breathes her potent spell,
Not vain she finds the charmful task,
In pageant quaint, in motley mask;
Behold, before her musing eyes,
The countless Manners round her rise;
While, ever varying as they pass,
To some Contempt applies her glass;
With these the white-robed maids combine;
And those the laughing Satyr's join!
But who is he whom now she views,
In robe of wild contending hues?
Thou by the Passions nursed; I greet
The comic sock that binds thy feet!
O Humour, thou whose name is known
To Britain's favoured isle alone:
Me too amidst thy band admit;
There where the young-eyed healthful wit,
(Whose jewels in his crisped hair
Are placed each other's beams to share;
Whom no delights from thee divide)
In laughter loosed, attends thy side!

By old Miletus,* who so long
Has ceased his love-inwoven song:
By all you taught the Tuscan maids,
In changed Italia's modern shades;
By him† whose knight's distinguished name
Refined a nation's lust of fame;
Whose tales e'en now, with echoes sweet,
Castalia's Moorish hills repeat;
Or him‡ whom Seine's blue nymphs deplore,
In watchet weeds on Gallia's shore;
Who drew the sad Sicilian maid,
By virtues in her sire betrayed.

O Nature boon, from whom proceed
Each forceful thought, each prompted deed,
If but from thee I hope to feel,
On all my heart imprint thy zeal!
Let some retreating cynic find
Those oft-turned scrolls I leave behind:
The Sports and I this hour agree,
To rove thy scene-full world with thee!

* Alluding to the Milesian tales, some of the earliest romances.

† Cervantes.

‡ Monsieur Le Sage, author of the incomparable Adventures of Gil Blas de Santillane, who died in Paris in the year 1745.

THE PASSIONS.—AN ODE FOR MUSIC

When Music, heavenly maid, was young,
While yet in early Greece she sung,
The Passions oft to hear her shell,
Thronged around her magic cell,
Exulting, trembling, raging, fainting,
Possessed beyond the Muse's painting;
By turns they felt the glowing mind
Disturbed, delighted, raised, refined;
Till once, 'tis said, when all were fired,
Filled with fury, rapt, inspired,
From the supporting myrtles round
They snatched her instruments of sound;
And, as they oft had heard apart
Sweet lessons of her forceful art,
Each (for madness ruled the hour)
Would prove his own expressive power.

First Fear his hand, its skill to try,
Amid the chords bewildered laid,
And back recoiled, he knew not why,
E'en at the sound himself had made.

Next Anger rushed: his eyes on fire,
In lightnings, owned his secret stings:
In one rude clash he struck the lyre,
And swept with hurried hand the strings

With woful measures wan Despair
Low sullen sounds his grief beguiled;
A solemn, strange, and mingled air:
'Twas sad by fits, by starts 'twas wild.

But thou, O Hope, with eyes so fair,
What was thy delighted measure?
Still it whispered promised pleasure,
And bade the lovely scenes at distance hail!
Still would her touch the strain prolong;
And from the rocks, the woods, the vale,
She called on Echo still, through all the song,
And, where her sweetest theme she chose,
A soft responsive voice was heard at every close,
And Hope enchanted smiled, and waved her golden hair.
And longer had she sung;—but with a frown,
Revenge impatient rose:
He threw his blood-stained sword in thunder down,

And, with a withering look,
The war-denouncing trumpet took,
And blew a blast so loud and dread,
Were ne'er prophetic sounds so full of wo!
And, ever, and anon, he beat
The doubling drum, with furious heat;
And, though sometimes, each dreary pause between,
Dejected Pity, at his side,
Her soul-subduing voice applied,
Yet still he kept his wild unaltered mien,
While each strained ball of sight seemed bursting from his head.

Thy numbers, Jealousy, to nought were fixed;
Sad proof of thy distressful state!
Of differing themes the veering song was mixed;
And now it courted Love, now raving called on Hate.

With eyes upraised, as one inspired,
Pale Melancholy sat retired:
And, from her wild sequestered seat,
In notes by distance made more sweet,
Poured through the mellow horn her pensive soul:
And dashing soft from rocks around,
Bubbling runnels joined the sound;
Through glades and glooms the mingled measures stole,
Or, o'er some haunted stream, with fond delay,
Round an holy calm diffusing,
Love of peace, and lonely musing,
In hollow murmurs died away.

But O! how altered was its sprightlier tone
When Cheerfulness, a nymph of healthiest hue,
Her bow across her shoulders flung,
Her buskins gemmed with morning dew,
Blew an inspiring air, that dale and thicket rung,
The hunter's call, to Faun and Dryad known.
The oak-crowned Sisters, and their chaste-eyed Queen,
Satyrs and sylvan boys were seen,
Peeping from forth their alleys green:
Brown Exercise rejoiced to hear;
And Sport leaped up, and seized his beechen spear.

Last came Joy's ecstatic trial:
He, with viny crown advancing,
First to the lively pipe his hand addrest;
But soon he saw the brisk awakening viol,
Whose sweet entrancing voice he loved the best:
They would have thought who heard the strain
They saw, in Tempe's vale, her native maids,
Amidst the festal sounding shades,
To some unwearied minstrel dancing,
While as his flying fingers kissed the strings,
Love framed with Mirth a gay fantastic round;
Loose were her tresses seen, her zone unbound,
And he, amidst his frolic play,
As if he would the charming air repay,
Shook thousand odours from his dewy wings.

O Music, sphere-descended maid,
Friend of Pleasure, Wisdom's aid!
Why, goddess! why, to us denied,
Lay'st thou thy ancient lyre aside?
As, in that loved Athenian bower,
You learned an all-commanding power,
Thy mimic soul, O Nymph endeared,
Can well recall what then it heard,
Where is thy native simple heart,
Devote to Virtue, Fancy, Art?
Arise, as in that elder time,
Warm, energic, chaste, sublime!
Thy wonders in that godlike age,
Fill thy recording sister's page—
'Tis said, and I believe the tale,
Thy humblest reed could more prevail,
Had more of strength, diviner rage,
Than all which charms this laggard age;
E'en all at once together found,
Cecilia's mingled word of sound—
O bid our vain endeavours cease;
Revive the just designs of Greece;
Return in all thy simple state!
Confirm the tales her sons relate!

AN EPISTLE,

Addressed to Sir Thomas Hanmer, on his Edition of Shakspeare's Works.

While, born to bring the Muse's happier days,
A patriot's hand protects the poet's lays,
While nursed by you she sees her myrtles bloom,
Green and unwithered o'er his honoured tomb;
Excuse her doubts, if yet she fears to tell
What secret transports in her bosom swell.
With conscious awe she hears the critic's fame,
And blushing hides her wreath at Shakspeare's name.
Hard was the lot those injured strains endured,
Unowned by Science, and by years obscured;
Fair Fancy wept; and echoing sighs confessed
A fixt despair in every tuneful breast.
Not with more grief the afflicted swains appear,
When wintry winds deform the plenteous year
When lingering frosts the ruined seats invade
Where Peace resorted, and the Graces played.

Each rising art by just gradation moves:
Toil builds on toil: and age on age improves:
The muse alone unequal dealt her rage,
And graced with noblest pomp her earliest stage
Preserved through time, the speaking scenes impart
Each changeful wish of Phædra's tortured heart:
Or paint the curse that marked the Theban's* reign;
A bed incestuous, and a father slain.

* The Œdipus of Sophocles.

With kind concern our pitying eyes o'erflow,
Trace the sad tale, and own another's wo.

To Rome removed, with wit secure to please,
The comic Sisters kept their native ease;
With jealous fear declining Greece beheld
Her own Meander's art almost excelled;
But every Muse essayed to rise in vain
Some laboured rival of her tragic strain;
Illysus' laurels, though transferred with toil,
Dropped their fair leaves, nor knew the unfriendly soil.

As Arts expired, resistless Dulness rose;
Goths, priests, or Vandals,—all were Learning's foes,
Till Julius* first recalled each exiled maid;
And Cosmo owned them in the Etrurian shade:
Then, deeply skilled in love's engaging theme,
The soft Provincial passed to Arno's stream:
With graceful ease the wanton lyre he strung;
Sweet flowed the lays—but love was all he sung.
The gay description could not fail to move;
For, led by nature, all are friends to love.

But Heaven, still various in its work, decreed
The perfect boast of time should last succeed.
The beauteous union must appear at length,
Of Tuscan fancy, and Athenian strength;
One greater Muse Eliza's reign adorn,
And even a Shakspeare to her fame be born!

Yet ah! so bright her morning's opening ray,
In vain our Britain hoped an equal day!
No second growth the western isle could bear,
At once exhausted with too rich a year.
Too nicely Johnson knew the critic's part;
Nature in him was almost lost in art.
Of softer mould the gentle Fletcher came,
The next in order as the next in name.
With pleased attention, midst his scenes we find
Each glowing thought that warms the female mind;
Each melting sigh, and every tender tear;
The lover's wishes, and the virgin's fear.
His† every strain the Smiles and Graces own:
But stronger Shakspeare felt for man alone;
Drawn by his pen, our ruder passions stand
The unrivaled picture of his early hand.

With‡ gradual steps and slow, exacter France
Saw Art's fair empire o'er her shores advance:
By length of toil a bright perfection knew,
Correctly bold, and just in all she drew:
Till late Corneille, with Lucan's* spirit fired,
Breathed the free strain, as Rome and he inspired
And classic judgment gained to sweet Racine
The temperate strength of Maro's chaster line.

But wilder far the British laurel spread,
And wreaths less artful crown our Poet's head.
Yet he alone to every scene could give
The historian's truth, and bid the manners live.
Waked at his call I view, with glad surprise,
Majestic forms of mighty monarchs rise.
There Henry's trumpets spread their loud alarms;
And laureled Conquest waits her hero's arms.
Here gentle Edward claims a pitying sigh,
Scarce born to honours, and so soon to die!
Yet shall thy throne, unhappy infant, bring
No beam of comfort to the guilty king:
The time† shall come when Glo'ster's heart shall bleed,
In life's last hours, with horror of the deed:
When dreary visions shall at last present
Thy vengeful image in the midnight tent:
Thy hand unseen the secret death shall bear;
Blunt the weak sword, and break th' oppressive spear!

Where'er we turn, by Fancy charmed, we find
Some sweet illusion of the cheated mind.
Oft, wild of wing, she calls the soul to rove
With humbler nature, in the rural grove;
Where swains contented own the quiet scene,
And twilight fairies tread the circled green:
Dressed by her hand, the woods and valleys smile,
And spring diffusive decks th' enchanted isle.

O, more than all, in powerful genius blest,
Come, take thine empire o'er the willing breast!
Whate'er the wounds this youthful heart shall feel,
Thy songs support me, and thy morals heal!
There every thought the Poet's warmth may raise;
There native music dwells in all the lays.
O might some verse with happiest skill persuade
Expressive picture to adopt thine aid!
What wondrous draughts may rise from every page!
What other Raphaels charm a distant age!

Methinks e'en now I view some free design
Where breathing Nature lives in every line:
Chaste and subdued the modest lights decay,
Steal into shades, and mildly melt away.
And see where Anthony‡ in tears approved,
Guards the pale relics of the chief he loved:
O'er the cold corse the warrior seems to bend,
Deep sunk in grief, and mourns his murdered friend!

* Julius II. the immediate predecessor of Leo X.

† Their characters are thus distinguished by Mr. Dryden.

‡ About the time of Shakspeare, the poet Hardy was in great repute in France. He wrote, according to Fontenelle, six hundred plays. The French poets after him applied themselves in general to the correct improvement of the stage, which was almost totally disregarded by those of our own country, Jonson excepted.

* The favourite author of the elder Corneille.

† Turno tempus erit, magno cum optaverit emptum
Intactum Pallanta, &c. Virg.

‡ See the Tragedy of Julius Cæsar.

Still as they press, he calls on all around,
Lifts the torn robe, and points the bleeding wound.

But who* is he whose brows exalted bear
A wrath impatient and a fiercer air?
Awake to all that injured worth can feel,
On his own Rome he turns th' avenging steel;
Yet shall not war's insatiate fury fall
(So heaven ordains it) on the destined wall.
See the fond mother, 'midst the plaintive train,
Hung on his knees, and prostrate on the plain!
Touched to the soul, in vain he strives to hide
The son's affection in the Roman's pride:
O'er all the man conflicting passions rise;
Rage grasps the sword, while Pity melts the eyes.

Thus, generous Critic, as thy Bard inspires,
The sister Arts shall nurse their drooping fires;
Each from his scenes her stores alternate bring;
Blend the fair tint, or wake the vocal string:
Those Sibyl-leaves, the sport of every wind,
(For Poets ever were a careless kind)
By thee disposed, no farther toil demand,
But just to Nature, own thy forming hand.

So spread o'er Greece, the harmonious whole unknown,
E'en Homer's numbers charmed by parts alone.
Their own Ulysses scarce had wandered more,
By winds and waters cast on every shore:
When, raised by fate, some former Hanmer joined
Each beauteous image of the boundless mind;
And bade, like thee, his Athens ever claim
A fond alliance with the Poet's name.

DIRGE IN CYMBELINE;

Sung by Guiderus and Arviragus over Fidele, supposed to be dead.

To fair Fidele's grassy tomb
Soft maids and village hinds shall bring
Each opening sweet of earliest bloom,
And rifle all the breathing spring

No wailing ghost shall dare appear
To vex with shrieks this quiet grove;
But shepherd lads assemble here,
And melting virgins own their love.

No withered witch shall here be seen;
No goblins lead their nightly crew:
The female fays shall haunt the green,
And dress thy grave with pearly dew!

The redbreast oft, at evening hours,
Shall kindly lend his little aid,
With hoary moss, and gathered flowers,
To deck the ground where thou art laid.

When howling winds, and beating rain,
In tempests shake thy Sylvan cell;
Or 'midst the chase, on every plain,
The tender thought on thee shall dwell:

Each lonely scene shall thee restore;
For thee the tear be duly shed;
Beloved, till life can charm no more,
And mourned, till Pity's self be dead.

ODE

ON THE DEATH OF MR. THOMSON.

The Scene of the following Stanzas is supposed to lie on the Thames, near Richmond.

In yonder grave a Druid lies,
Where slowly winds the stealing wave!
The year's best sweets shall duteous rise,
To deck its poet's sylvan grave!

In yon deep bed of whispering reeds
His airy harp* shall now be laid;
That he, whose heart in sorrow bleeds,
May love through life the soothing shade.

Then maids and youths shall linger here;
And, while its sounds at distance swell,
Shall sadly seem in Pity's ear
To hear the woodland pilgrim's knell.

Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore,
When Thames in summer wreaths is drest;
And oft suspend the dashing oar,
To bid his gentle spirit rest!

And, oft as ease and health retire
To breezy lawn, or forest deep,
The friend shall view yon whitening† spire
And 'mid the varied landscape weep.

But thou who own'st that earthly bed,
Ah! what will every dirge avail!
Or tears which Love and Pity shed,
That mourn beneath the gliding sail!

Yet lives there one whose heedless eye
Shall scorn thy pale shrine glimmering near;
With him, sweet Bard, may Fancy die;
And joy desert the blooming year.

But thou, lorn stream, whose sullen tide
No sedge-crowned sisters now attend,
Now waft me from the green-hill's side
Whose cold turf hides the buried friend!

Coriolanus See Mr Spence's Dialogue on the Odyssey.

* The harp of Æolus, of which see a description in the Castle of Indolence.

† Richmond Church, in which Thomson was buried.

And see, the fairy valleys fade:
Dun Night has veiled the solemn view!
Yet once again, dear parted shade,
Meek Nature's child, again adieu!

The genial meads,* assigned to bless
Thy life, shall mourn thy early doom;
There hinds and shepherd-girls shall dress,
With simple hands, thy rural tomb.

Long, long, thy stone and pointed clay
Shall melt the musing Briton's eyes;
O! vales, and wild woods, shall he say,
In yonder grave your Druid lies!

VERSES

Written on a Paper which contained a Piece of Bride-cake.

Ye curious hands that hid from vulgar eyes,
By search profane shall find this hallowed cake,
With virtue's awe forbear the sacred prize,
Nor dare a theft, for love and pity's sake!

This precious relic, formed by magic power,
Beneath the shepherd's haunted pillow laid,
Was meant by love to charm the silent hour,
The secret present of a matchless maid.

The Cyprian queen, at Hymen's fond request,
Each nice ingredient chose with happiest art;
Fears, sighs, and wishes of th' enamoured breast,
And pains that please, are mixed in every part.

With rosy hand the spicy fruit she brought,
From Paphian hills, and fair Cytherea's isle;
And tempered sweet with these the melting thought,
The kiss ambrosial, and the yielding smile.

Ambiguous looks, that scorn and yet relent,
Denials mild, and firm unaltered truth;
Reluctant pride, and amorous faint consent,
And meeting ardours, and exulting youth.

Sleep, wayward God! hath sworn, while these remain,
With flattering dreams to dry his nightly tear,
And cheerful Hope, so oft invoked in vain,
With fairy songs shall sooth his pensive ear.

If, bound by vows to Friendship's gentle side,
And fond of soul, thou hop'st an equal grace,
If youth or maid thy joys and griefs divide,
O, much entreated, leave this fatal place!

Sweet Peace, who long hath shunned my plaintive day,
Consents at length to bring me short delight;
Thy careless steps may scare her doves away,
And grief with raven note usurp the night.

* Mr. Thomson resided in the neighbourhood of Richmond some time before his death.

ODE

On the popular Superstitions of the Highlands of Scotland; considered as the subject of Poetry.

Inscribed to Mr. John Home.

Home! thou return'st from Thames, whose Naiads long
Have seen thee lingering with a fond delay,
Midst those soft friends, whose hearts, some future day,
Shall melt, perhaps, to hear thy tragic song.*
Go, not unmindful of that cordial youth†
Whom, long-endeared, thou leav'st by Lavant's side;
Together let us wish him lasting truth,
And joy untainted, with his destined bride.
Go! nor regardless, while these numbers boast
My short-lived bliss, forget my social name;
But think, far off, how, on the southern coast
I met thy friendship with an equal flame!
Fresh to that soil thou turn'st, where every vale
Shall prompt the Poet, and his song demand;
To thee thy copious subjects ne'er shall fail;
Thou need'st but take thy pencil to thy hand,
And paint what all believe, who own thy genial land.

There, must thou wake, perforce, thy Doric quill:
'Tis Fancy's land to which thou sett'st thy feet;
Where still, 'tis said, the fairy people meet,
Beneath each birken shade, on mead or hill.
There, each trim lass, that skims the milky store,
To the swart tribes their creamy bowls allots;
By night they sip it round the cottage door,
While airy minstrels warble jocund notes.
There, every herd, by sad experience, knows
How, winged with fate, their elf-shot arrows fly,
When the sick ewe her summer food foregoes,
Or, stretched on earth, the heart-smit heifers lie,
Such airy beings awe the untutored swain:
Nor thou, though learned, his homelier thoughts neglect;
Let thy sweet muse the rural faith sustain;
These are the themes of simple, sure effect,
That add new conquests to her boundless reign,
And fill, with double force, her heart-commanding strain.

E'en yet preserved, how often may'st thou hear,
Where to the pole the Boreal mountains run,
Taught by the father to his listening son,
Strange lays, whose power had charmed a Spenser's ear.
At every pause, before thy mind possest,
Old Runic bards shall seem to rise around,

* How truly did Collins predict Home's tragic powers

† A gentleman of the name of Barrow who introduced Home to Collins.

With uncouth lyres, in many-coloured vest,
Their matted hair with boughs fantastic crowned:
Whether thou bid'st the well-taught hind repeat
The choral dirge that mourns some chieftain brave,
When every shrieking maid her bosom beat,
And strewed with choicest herbs his scented grave!
Or whether sitting in the shepherd's shiel,*
Thou hear'st some sounding tale of war's alarms;
When at the bugle's call with fire and steel,
The sturdy clans poured forth their brawny swarms,
And hostile brothers met, to prove each other's arms.

'Tis thine to sing, how, framing hideous spells,
In Sky's lone isle, the gifted wizard-seer,
Lodged in the wintry cave with Fate's fell spear,
Or in the depth of Uist's dark forest dwells:
How they, whose sight such dreary dreams engross,
With their own vision oft astonished droop,
When o'er the watery strath, or quaggy moss,
They see the gliding ghosts unbodied troop.
Or, if in sports, or on the festive green,
Their destined glance some fated youth descry,
Who now, perhaps, in lusty vigour seen,
And rosy health, shall soon lamented die.
For them the viewless forms of air obey:
Their bidding heed, and at their beck repair:
They know what spirit brews the stormful day,
And heartless, oft like moody madness, stare
To see the phantom train their secret work prepare.

To monarchs dear,† some hundred miles astray,
Oft have they seen Fate give the fatal blow!
The seer, in Sky, shrieked as the blood did flow!
When headless Charles warm on the scaffold lay!

As Boreas threw his young Aurora* forth,
In the first year of the first George's reign,
And battles raged in welkin of the North,
They mourned in air, fell, fell rebellion slain!
And as, of late, they joyed in Preston's fight,
Saw, at sad Falkirk, all their hopes near crowned!
They raved! divining, through their second sight,†
Pale, red Culloden, where these hopes were drowned!
Illustrious William!‡ Britain's guardian name;
One William saved us from a tyrant's stroke;
He, for a sceptre, gained heroic fame,

---

* A summer hut, built in the high part of the mountains, to tend their flocks in the warm season, when the pasture is fine.

† The fifth stanza, and the half of the sixth, in Dr. Carlyle's copy, printed in the first volume of the "Transactions" of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, being deficient, have been supplied by Mr. Mackenzie; whose lines are here annexed, for the purpose of comparison, and to do justice to the elegant author of the Man of Feeling.

"Or on some bellying rock that shades the deep,
They view the lurid signs that cross the sky,
Where in the west, the brooding tempests lie,
And hear the first, faint rustling pennons sweep.
Or in the arched cave, where deep and dark
The broad, unbroken billows heave and swell,
In horrid musings wrapt, they sit to mark
The lab'ring moon; or list the mighty yell
Of that dread spirit whose gigantic form,
The seer's entranced eye can well survey,
Through the dim air who guides the driving storm,
And points the wretched bark its destined prey.
Or him who hovers on his flagging wing,
O'er the dire whirlpool, that, in ocean's waste,
Draws instant down whate'er devoted thing
The falling breeze within its reach hath placed—
The distant seaman hears, and flies with trembling haste.
Or, if on land the fiend exerts his sway,
Silent he broods o'er quicksand, bog, or fen,
Far from the sheltering roof and haunts of men,
When witched darkness shuts the eye of day,
And shrouds each star that wont to cheer the night;
Or, if the drifted snow perplex the way,
With treacherous gleam he lures the fated wight,
And leads him floundering on and quite astray."

Shortly after these lines by Mr. Mackenzie had been published, the following were produced; which many readers probably will think have at least as much of Collins's manner in them:

"For oft when Eve hath spread her dusky veil,
And hid each star that wont to cheer the night,
In some deep glen remote from human sight,
The grisly wizard his associates hail.
There at the thrilling verse, and charmed spell,
Fantastic shapes and direful shadows throng;
Night's sober ear piercing with hideous yell,
While in the goblin round they troop along.

"Thence each betakes him to his several toil;
To dive, to fly, to ride the wintry blast,
To dig the mine, to cleave the church-yard soil,
Or rake the bottom of the watery waste.
Each powerful drug, with more than mortal skill,
Where'er bestowed, or hid from searching eye,
Selecting heedful of their tasker's will:
Nor cease their labours till the dawn descry
Their hated impious work, and reddens all the sky.

"Nor wilt thou leave for other bards to sing,
The ruthless spirit of the angry flood;
How, at gray eve, in fell and crafty mood,
O'er fen and lake he shakes his foggy wing:
Or when the curfew with his sullen note,
Unchains, to roam the earth, each elfin sprite,
Like some drear lamp, from out the quaggy moat,
The fiend shines forth, to lure th' incautious wight."

* By young Aurora, Collins undoubtedly meant the first appearance of the northern lights, which happened about the year 1715; at least, it is most highly probable, from this peculiar circumstance, that no ancient writer whatever has taken any notice of them, nor even any one modern, previous to the above per ∞.

† Second sight is the term that is used for the divination of the Highlanders.

‡ The late duke of Cumberland, who defeated the Pretender at the battle of Culloden.

But thou, more glorious, Slavery's chain hast broke,
To reign a private man, and bow to Freedom's yoke!

These too, thou'lt sing! for well thy magic muse
Can to the topmost heaven of grandeur soar;
Or stoop to wail the swain that is no more!
Ah, homely swains! your homeward steps ne'er lose;
Let not dank Will* mislead you to the heath;
Dancing in mirky night, o'er fen and lake,
He glows to draw you downward to your death,
In his bewitched, low, marshy, willow brake!
What though far off from some dark dell espied,
His glimmering mazes cheer th' excursive sight,
Yet turn, ye wanderers, turn your steps aside,
Nor trust the guidance of that faithless light;
For watchful, lurking, 'mid th' unrustling reed,
At those mirk hours the wily monster lies,
And listens oft to hear the passing steed,
And frequent round him rolls his sullen eyes,
If chance his savage wrath may some weak wretch surprise.

Ah, luckless swain, o'er all unblest, indeed!
Whom late bewildered in the dank, dark fen,
Far from the flocks, and smoking hamlet, then!
To that sad spot where hums the sedgy weed:
On him, enraged, the fiend, in angry mood,
Shall never look with Pity's kind concern,
But instant furious, raise the whelming flood
O'er its drowned banks, forbidding all return!
Or, if he meditate his wished escape,
To some dim hill, that seems uprising near,
To his faint eye, the grim and grisly shape,
In all its terrors clad, shall wild appear,
Meantime the watery surge shall round him rise,
Poured sudden forth from every swelling source!
What now remains but tears and hopeless sighs?
His fear-shook limbs have lost their youthful force,
And down the waves he floats, a pale and breathless corse!

For him in vain his anxious wife shall wait,
Or wander forth to meet him on his way;
For him in vain at to-fall of the day,
His babes shall linger at th' unclosing gate!
Ah, ne'er shall he return! Alone, if Night,
Her traveled limbs in broken slumbers steep!
With drooping willows drest, his mournful sprite
Shall visit sad, perchance, her silent sleep:
Then he, perhaps, with moist and watery hand,
Shall fondly seem to press her shuddering cheek,
And with his blue-swoln face before her stand,
And, shivering cold, these piteous accents speak:

"Pursue, dear wife, thy daily toils, pursue,
At dawn or dusk, industrious as before;
Nor e'er of me one helpless thought renew,
While I lie weltering on the osiered shore,
Drowned by the Kelpie's* wrath, nor e'er shall aid thee more!"

Unbounded is thy range; with varied skill
Thy muse may, like those feathery tribes which spring
From their rude rocks, extend her skirting wing
Round the moist marge of each cold Hebrid isle,
To that hoar pile† which still its ruins shows:
In whose small vaults a pigmy-folk is found,
Whose bones the delver with his spade upthrows,
And culls them, wondering, from the hallowed ground!
Or thither,‡ where beneath the showery west,
The mighty kings of three fair realms are laid:
Once foes, perhaps, together now they rest,
No slaves revere them, and no wars invade:
Yet frequent now, at midnight solemn hour,
The rifted mounds their yawning cells unfold,
And forth the monarchs stalk with sovereign power,
In pageant robes, and wreathed with sheeny gold,
And on their twilight tombs aërial council hold.

But, oh, o'er all, forget not Kilda's race,
On whose bleak rocks, which brave the wasting tides,
Fair Nature's daughter, Virtue, yet abides.
Go! just, as they, their blameless manners trace!
Then to my ear transmit some gentle song
Of those whose lives are yet sincere and plain,
Their bounded walks the rugged cliffs along,
And all their prospect but the wintry main.
With sparing temperance, at the needful time,
They drain the scented spring; or hunger-prest,
Along th' Atlantic rock, undreading climb,
And of its eggs despoil the solan's§ nest.
Thus blest in primal innocence they live,
Sufficed, and happy with that frugal fare
Which tasteful toil and hourly danger give.
Hard is their shallow soil, and bleak and bare;
Nor ever vernal bee was heard to murmur there!

Nor need'st thou blush that such false themes engage
Thy gentle mind, of fairer stores possest;
For not alone they touch the village breast,
But filled in elder time, th' historic page.
There, Shakspeare's self, with every garland crowned,

* A fiery meteor, called by various names, such as Will with the Wisp, Jack with the Lantern, &c.; it hovers in the air over marshy and fenny places.

* The water-fiend.

† One of the Hebrides is called the Isle of Pigmies; where, it is reported, that several miniature bones of the human species have been dug up in the ruins of a chapel there.

‡ Icolmkill, one of the Hebrides, where near sixty of the ancient Scottish, Irish, and Norwegian kings are interred.

§ An aquatic bird like a goose, on the eggs of which the inhabitants of St. Kilda, another of the Hebrides, chiefly subsist

Flew to those fairy climes his fancy sheen,
In musing hour; his wayward sisters found,
And with their terrors drest the magic scene.
From them he sung, when, 'mid his bold design,
Before the Scot, afflicted, and aghast!
The shadowy kings of Banquo's fated line
Through the dark cave in gleamy pageant passed.
Proceed! nor quit the tales which, simply told,
Could once so well my answering bosom pierce;
Proceed, in forceful sounds, and colour bold,
The native legends of thy land rehearse;
To such adapt thy lyre, and suit thy powerful verse.

In scenes like these, which, daring to depart
From sober truth, are still to Nature true,
And call forth fresh delight to Fancy's view,
'Th' heroic muse employed her Tasso's art!
How have I trembled, when, at Tancred's stroke,
Its gushing blood the gaping cypress poured!
When each live plant with mortal accents spoke!
And the wild blast upheaved the vanished sword!
How have I sat, when piped the pensive wind,
To hear his harp by British Fairfax strung!
Prevailing Poet! whose undoubting mind!
Believed the magic wonders which he sung!
Hence, at each sound, imagination glows!
Hence, at each picture, vivid life starts here!
Hence his warm lay with softest sweetness flows!
Melting it flows, pure, murmuring, strong, and clear,
And fills th' impassioned heart, and wins th' harmonious ear!

All hail, ye scenes that o'er my soul prevail;
Ye splendid friths and lakes, which, far away,
Are by smooth Annan* filled, or past'ral Tay,*
Or Don's* romantic springs, at distance hail!
The time shall come, when I, perhaps, may tread
Your lowly glens,† o'erhung with spreading broom;
Or, o'er your stretching heaths, by Fancy led;
Or o'er your mountains creep, in awful gloom!
Then will I dress once more the faded bower,
Where Jonson‡ sat in Drummond's classic shade;
Or crop from Tiviotdale, each lyric flower,
And mourn on Yarrow's banks, where Willy's laid!
Meantime, ye powers that on the plains which bore
The cordial youth, on Lothian's plains§ attend!—
Where'er Home dwells, on hill, or lowly moor,
To him I love your kind protection lend,
And touched with love like mine, preserve my absent friend!

* Three rivers in Scotland. † Valleys.

‡ Ben Jonson paid a visit on foot, in 1619, to the Scotch poet Drummond, at his seat of Hawthornden, within four miles of Edinburgh.

§ Barrow, it seems, was at the Edinburgh University, which is in the county of Lothian.

The following exquisite *Supplemental Stanzas* to the foregoing Ode, will be found to commemorate some striking Scottish superstitions omitted by Collins. They are the production of William Erskine, Esq. Advocate, and form a Continuation of the Address, by Collins, to the Author of Douglas, exhorting him to celebrate the traditions of Scotland. They originally appeared in the Edinburgh Magazine for April, 1788.

"Thy muse may tell, how, when at evening's close,
To meet her love beneath her twilight shade,
O'er many a broom-clad brae and heathy glade,
In merry mood the village maiden goes,
There, on a streamlet's margin as she lies,
Chanting some carol till her swain appears,
With visage, deadly pale, in pensive guise,
Beneath a withered fir his form he rears!*
Shrieking and sad she bends her eirie flight,
When mid dire heaths, where flits the taper blue,
The whilst the moon sheds dim a sickly light,
The airy unreal meets her blasted view!
When, trembling, weak, she gains her cottage low,
Where magpies scatter notes of presage wide,
Some one shall tell, while tears in torrents flow,
That just when twilight dimmed the green hills' side,
Far in his lonely sheil her hapless shepherd died.

"Let these sad strains to lighter sounds give place!
Bid thy brisk viol warble measures gay!
For see! recalled by thy resistless lay,
Once more the Brownie shows his honest face.
Hail, from thy wanderings long, my much-loved sprite,
Thou friend, thou lover of the lowly, hail,
Tell, in what realms thou sport'st thy merry night,
Trail'st the long mop, or whirl'st the mimic flail.
Where dost thou deck the much-disordered hall,
While the tired damsel in Eysium sleeps,
With early voice to drowsy workmen call,
Or lull the dame while mirth his vigils keeps?
'Twas thus in Caledonia's domes, 'tis said,
Thou plied'st the kindly task in years of yore.
At last, in luckless hour, some erring maid
Spread in thy nightly cell of viands store:
Ne'er was their form beheld among the mountains more.†

* The wraith, or spectral appearance, of a person shortly to die, is a firm article in the creed of Scottish superstition. Nor is it unknown in our sister kingdom. See the beautiful Lady Diana Rich.—*Aubrey's Miscellanies*, p. 89.

† 'The *Brownie* formed a class of beings, distinct in habit and disposition from the freakish and mischievous elves. He was meagre, shaggy, and wild in his appearance. Thus, Clealand, in his satire against the Highlanders, compares them to

'Faunes, or *brownies*, if ye will,
Or satyrs come from Atlas hill.

'In the day time, he lurked in remote recesses of the old houses which he delighted to haunt; and, in the night, sedulously employed himself in discharging any laborious task

"Then wake (for well thou can'st) that wondrous lay,
How, while around the thoughtless matrons sleep,
Soft o'er the floor the treacherous fairies creep,
And bear the smiling infant far away:
How starts the nurse, when for her lovely child,
She sees at dawn a gaping idiot stare!
O snatch the innocent from demons wild,
And save the parents fond from fell despair!
In a deep cave the trusty menials wait,
When from their hilly dens at midnight's hour,
Forth rush the airy elves in mimic state,
And o'er the moonlight heath with swiftness scour:
In glittering arms the little horsemen shine;
Last, on a milk-white steed, with targe of gold,
A fay of might appears, whose arms entwine
The lost-lamented child! the Shepherds bold*
The unconscious infant tear from his unhallowed hold."

which he thought might be acceptable to the family, to whose service he had devoted himself. But, although, like Milton's lubber fiend, he loves to stretch himself by the fire,† he does not drudge from the hope of recompense. On the contrary, so delicate is his attachment, that the offer of reward, but particularly of food, infallibly occasions his disappearance for ever.‡

* '—how the drudging goblin sweats,
To earn the cream-bowl, duly set!
When, in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail had thrashed the corn,
That ten day-lab'rers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubber fiend
And stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks on the fire his airy strength:
And, crop-full out of door he flings,
E'er the first cock his matin rings.'
L'Allegro.

† 'When the menials in a Scottish family protracted their vigils around the kitchen fire, Brownie, weary of being excluded from the midnight hearth, sometimes appeared at the door, seemed to watch their departure, and thus admonished them—"Gang a' to your beds, sir, and dinna put out the wee *grieshoch* (embers." ')

‡ It is told of a Brownie, who haunted a border family now extinct, that the lady having fallen unexpectedly in labour, and the servant who was ordered to ride to Jedburgh for the *sage femme* showing no great alertness in setting out, the familiar spirit slipt on the great-coat of the lingering domestic, rode to the town on the laird's best horse, and returned with the midwife *en croupe*. During the short space of his absence, the Tweed, which they must necessarily ford, rose to a dangerous height. Brownie, who transported his charge with all the rapidity of the ghostly lover of *Lenora*, was not to be stopped by this obstacle. He plunged in with the terrified lady, and landed her in safety where her services were wanted. Having put the horse into the stable where it was afterwards found in a woful plight, he proceeded to the room of the servant, whose duty he had discharged; and finding him just in the act of drawing on his boots, he administered to him a most merciless drubbing with his own horse-whip. Such an important service excited the gratitude of the laird; who, understanding that Brownie had been heard to express a wish to have a green coat, ordered a vestment of that colour to be made, and left in his haunts. Brownie took away the green coat, but never was seen more. We may suppose, that tired of his domestic drudgery, he went in his new livery to join the fairies.

'The last Brownie, known in Ettrick forest, resided in Bodsbeck, a wild and solitary spot, where he exercised his functions undisturbed, till the scrupulous devotion of an old lady induced her to *hire him away*, as it was termed, by placing in his haunt a porringer of milk and a piece of money. After receiving this hint to depart, he was heard the whole night to howl and cry, "Farewell to bonny Bodsbeck!" which he was compelled to abandon for ever.'

It seems no improbable conjecture, that the *Brownie* is a legitimate descendant of the *Lar Familiaris* of the ancient

* For an account of the Fairy superstition, see the Introduction to the "Tale of Tamlane," in that elegant work called *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol. ii. p. 174. Second Edition.

THE END.

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